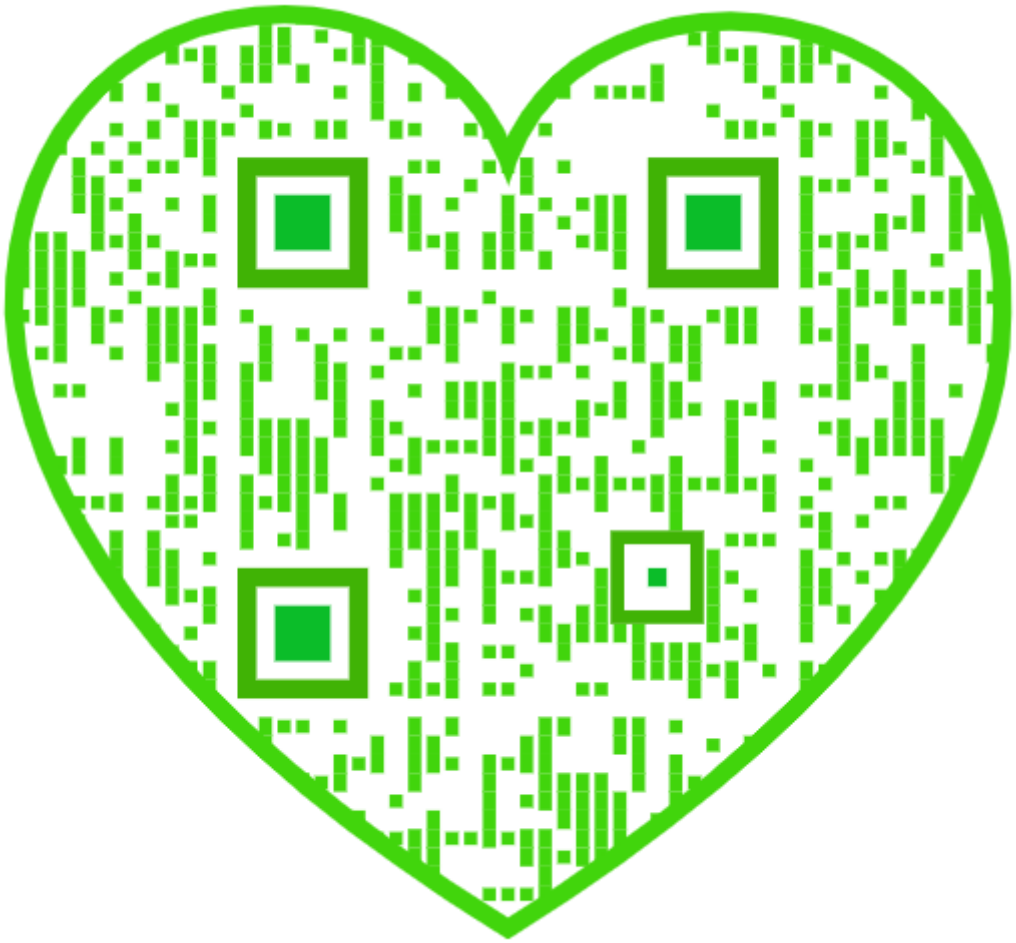

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Over the Stubble Fields

THE

BADMINTON MAGAZINE

OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

EDITED BY

ALFRED E. T. WATSON

Volume X.

JANUARY to JUNE 1900

LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN
1900

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Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
London & Edinburgh

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The Badminton Magazine

THE TINKER'S DOG

BY E. Œ. SOMERVILLE AND MARTIN ROSS

'CAN'T you head 'em off, Patsey? Run, you fool! *run*, can't you?'

Sounds followed that suggested the intemperate use of Mr. Freddy Alexander's pocket-handkerchief, but that were, in effect, produced by his struggle with a brand new hunting horn. To this demonstration about as much attention was paid by the nine couple of buccaneers whom he was now exercising for the first time as might have been expected, and it was brought to an abrupt conclusion by the sudden charge of two of them from the rear. Being coupled, they mowed his legs from under him as irresistibly as chain shot, and being puppies, and of an imbecile friendliness, they remained to lick his face and generally make merry over him as he struggled to his feet.

By this time the leaders of the pack were well away up a ploughed field, over a fence, and into a furze brake, from which their rejoicing yelps streamed back on the damp breeze. The Master of the Craffroe Hounds picked himself up, and sprinted up the hill after the Whip and Kennel Huntsman—a composite official recently promoted from the stable yard—in a way that

showed that his failure in horn-blowing was not the fault of his lungs. His feet were held by the heavy soil, he tripped in the muddy ridges; none the less he and Patsey plunged together over the stony rampart of the field in time to see Negress and Lily springing through the furze in kangaroo leaps, while they uttered long squeals of ecstasy. The rest of the pack, with a confidence gained in many a successful riot, got to them as promptly as if six whips were behind them, and the whole faction plunged into a little wood on the top of what was evidently a burning scent.

'Was it a fox, Patsey?' said the Master, excitedly.

'I dunno, Master Freddy; it might be 'twas a hare,' returned Patsey, taking in a hurried reef in the strap that was responsible for the support of his trousers.

Freddy was small and light, and four short years before had been a renowned hare in his school paper-chases: he went through the wood at a pace that gave Patsey and the puppies all they could do to keep with him, and dropped into a road just in time to see the pack streaming up a narrow lane near the end of the wood. At this point they were reinforced by a yellow dachshund who, with wildly flapping ears, and at that caricature of a gallop peculiar to his kind, joined himself to the hunters.

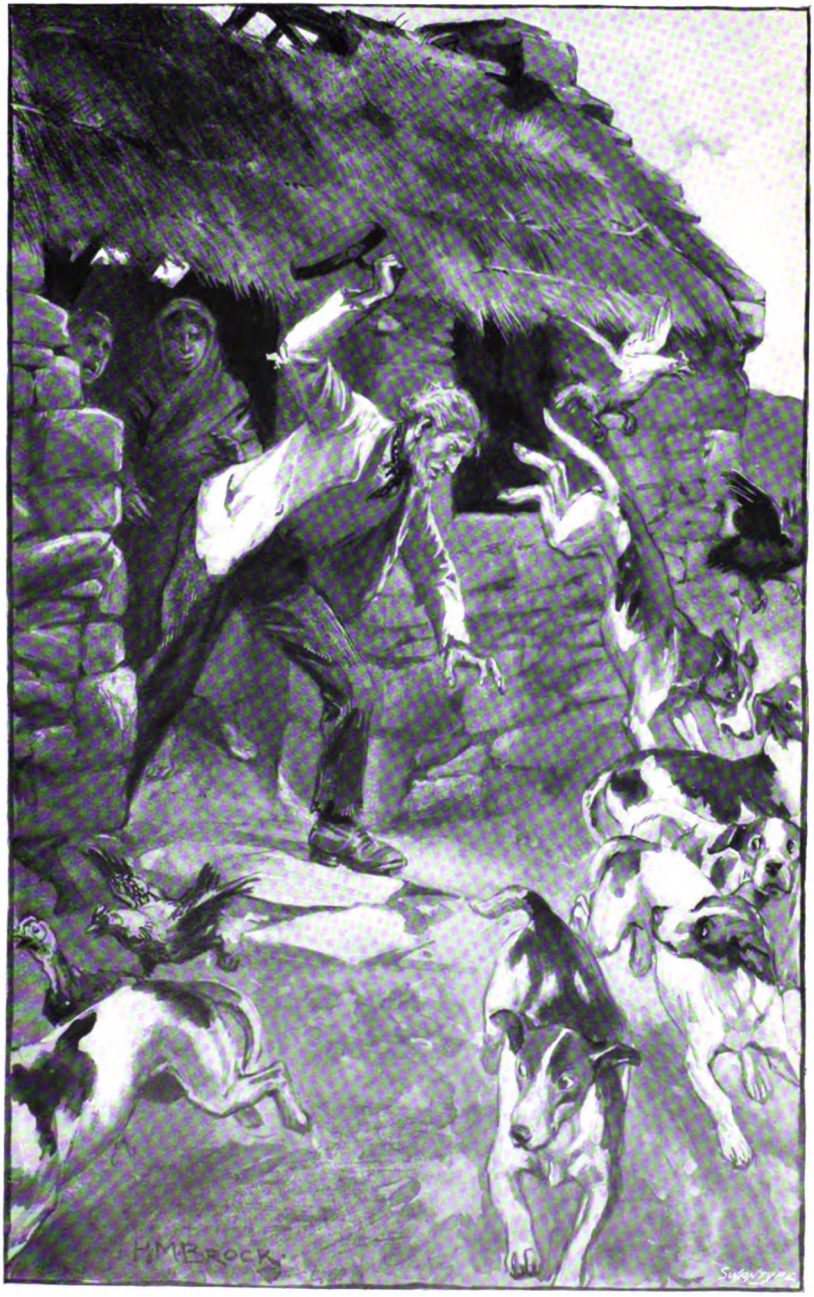
'Glory be to Mercy!' exclaimed Patsey, 'the misthress's dog!'

Almost simultaneously the pack precipitated themselves into a ruined cabin at the end of the lane; instantly from within arose an uproar of sounds—crashes of an ironmongery sort, yells of dogs, raucous human curses; then the ruin exuded hounds, hens, and turkeys at every one of the gaps in its walls, and there issued from what had been the doorway a tall man with a red beard, armed with a large frying-pan, with which he rained blows on the fleeing Craffroe Pack. It must be admitted that the speed with which these abandoned their prey, whatever it was, suggested a very intimate acquaintance with the wrath of cooks and the perils of resistance.

Before their lawful custodians had recovered from this spectacle, a tall lady in black was suddenly merged in the *mêlée*, alternately calling loudly and incongruously for 'Bismarck,' and blowing shrill blasts on a whistle.

'If the tinker laves a sthroke of the pan on the misthress's dog, Mercy help him!' said Patsey, starting in pursuit of Lily, who, with tail tucked in and a wounded hind leg buckled up, was removing herself swiftly from the scene of action.

Mrs. Alexander shoved her way into the cabin, through a



RAINED BLOWS ON THE FLEEING CRAFFROE PACK

filthy group of gabbling male and female tinkers, and found herself involved in a wreck of branches and ragged tarpaulin that had once formed a kind of tent, but was now strewn on the floor by the incursion and excursion of the chase. Earthquake throes were convulsing the tarpaulin ; a tinker woman, full of zeal, dashed at it and flung it back, revealing, amongst other *débris*, an old wooden bedstead heaped with rags. On either side of one of its legs protruded the passion-fraught faces of the coupled hound-puppies, who, still linked together, had passed through the period of unavailing struggle into a state of paralysed insanity of terror. Muffled squeals and tinny crashes told that conflict was still raging beneath the bed ; the tinker women screamed abuse and complaint ; and suddenly the dachshund's long yellow nose, streaming with blood, worked its way out of the folds. His mistress snatched at his collar and dragged him forth, and at his heels followed an infuriated tom cat, which, with its tail as thick as a muff, went like a streak through the confusion, and was lost in the dark ruin of the chimney.

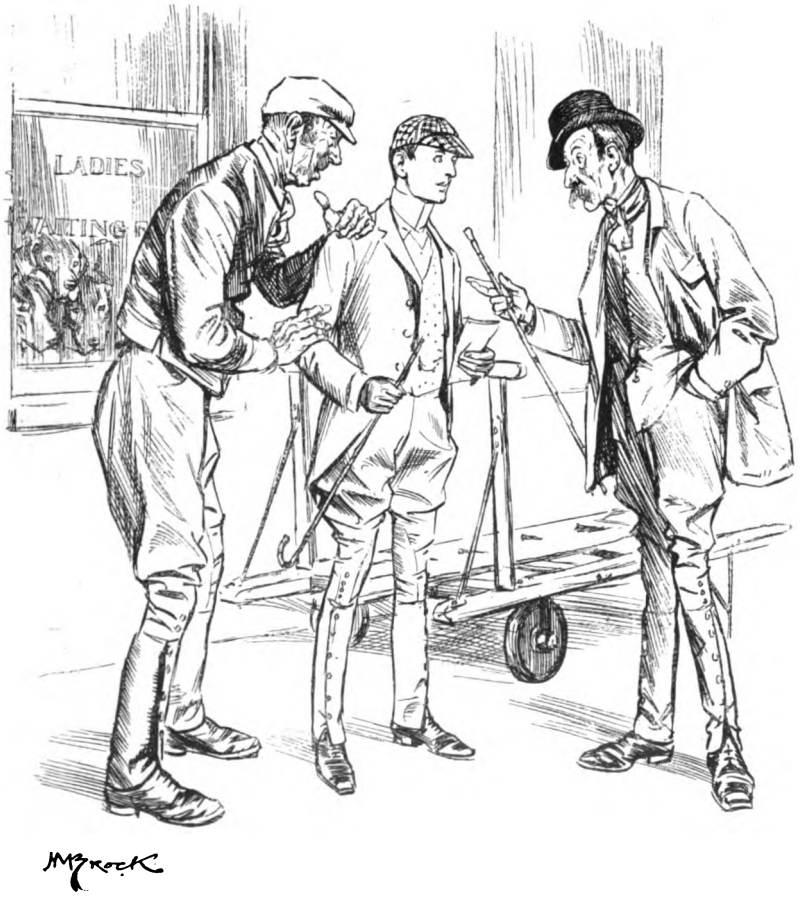
Mrs. Alexander stayed for no explanations : she extricated herself from the tinker party, and, filled with a righteous wrath, went forth to look for her son. From a plantation three fields away came the asphyxiated bleats of the horn and the desolate bawls of Patsey Crimmeen. Mrs. Alexander decided that it was better for the present to leave the *personnel* of the Craffroe Hunt to their own devices.

It was but three days before these occurrences that Mr. Freddy Alexander had stood on the platform of the Craffroe Station, with a throbbing heart, and a very dirty paper in his hand containing a list of eighteen names, that ranged alphabetically from 'Batchellor' to 'Warior.' At his elbow stood a small man with a large moustache, and the thinnest legs that were ever buttoned into gaiters, who was assuring him that to no other man in Ireland would he have sold those hounds at such a price ; a statement that was probably unimpeachable.

'The only reason I'm parting them is I'm giving up me drag, and selling me stock, and going into partnership with a veterinary surgeon in Rugby. You've some of the best blood in Ireland in those hounds.'

'Is it blood?' chimed in an old man who was standing, slightly drunk, at Mr. Alexander's other elbow. 'The most of them hounds is by the Kerry Rapparee, and he was the last of the old Moynalty Baygles. Black dogs they were, with red

eyes! Every one o' them as big as a yearling calf, and they'd hunt anything that'd roar before them!' He steadied himself on the new Master's arm. 'I have them gethered in the ladies' waiting-room, sir, the way ye'll have no throuble. 'Twould be as good for ye to lave the muzzles on them till ye'll be through the town.'



'YOU'VE SOME OF THE BEST BLOOD IN IRELAND IN THOSE HOUNDS

Freddy Alexander cannot to this hour decide what was the worst incident of that homeward journey; on the whole, perhaps, the most serious was the escape of Governess, who subsequently ravaged the country for two days, and was at length captured in the act of killing Mrs. Alexander's white Leghorn cock. For a young gentleman whose experience of hounds consisted in having learned at Cambridge to some slight and

painful extent that if he rode too near them he got sworn at, the purchaser of the Kerry Rapparee's descendants had undertaken no mean task.

On the morning following on the first run of the Craffroe Hounds, Mrs. Alexander was sitting at her escritoire, making up her weekly accounts and entering in her poultry-book the untimely demise of the Leghorn cock. She was a lady of secret enthusiasms which sheltered themselves behind habits of the most businesslike severity. Her books were models of order, and as she neatly inscribed the Leghorn cock's epitaph, 'Killed by hounds,' she could not repress the compensating thought that she had never seen Freddy's dark eyes and olive complexion look so well as when he had tried on his new pink coat.

At this point she heard a step on the gravel outside ; Bismarck uttered a bloodhound bay and got under the sofa. It was a sunny morning in late October, and the French window was open ; outside it, ragged as a Russian poodle and nearly as black, stood the tinker who had the day before wielded the frying-pan with such effect.

'Me lady,' began the tinker, 'I ax yer ladyship's pardon, but me little dog is dead.'

'Well ?' said Mrs. Alexander, fixing a gaze of clear grey rectitude upon him.

'Me lady,' continued the tinker, reverentially but firmly, ''twas afther he was run by thim dogs yestherday, and 'twas your ladyship's dog that finished him. He tore the throat out of him under the bed !' He pointed an accusing forefinger at Bismarck, whose lambent eyes of terror glowed from beneath the valance of the sofa.

'Nonsense ! I saw your dog ; he was twice my dog's size,' said Bismarck's mistress decidedly, not, however, without a remembrance of the blood on Bismarck's nose. She adored courage, and had always cherished a belief that Bismarck's sharklike jaws implied the possession of latent ferocity.

'Ah, but he was very wake, ma'am, afther he bein' hunted,' urged the tinker. 'I never slep' a wink the whole night, but keepin' sups o' milk to him and all sorts. Ah, ma'am, ye wouldn't like to be lookin' at him !'

The tinker was a very good-looking young man, almost apostolic in type, with a golden red aureole of hair and beard and candid blue eyes. These latter filled with tears as their owner continued :

'He was like a brother for me ; sure he follied me from

home. 'Twas he was dam wise! Sure at home all me mother'd say to him was, "Where's the ducks, Captain?" an' he wouldn't lave wather nor boghole round the counthry but he'd have them walked and the ducks gethered. The pigs could be in their choice place, wherever they'd be he'd go around them. If ye'd tell him to put back the childhren from the fire, he'd ketch them by the sleeve and dhrag them.'

The requiem ceased, and the tinker looked grievingly into his hat.

'What is your name?' asked Mrs. Alexander sternly. 'How long is it since you left home?'

Had the tinker been as well acquainted with her as he was afterwards destined to become, he would have been aware that when she was most judicial she was frequently least certain of what her verdict was going to be.

'Me name's Willy Fennessy, me lady,' replied the tinker, 'an' I'm goin' the roads no more than three months. Indeed, me lady, I think the time too long that I'm with these blagyard thravellers. All the friends I have was poor Captain, and he's gone from me.'

'Go round to the kitchen,' said Mrs. Alexander.

The results of Willy Fennessy's going round to the kitchen were far-reaching. Its most immediate consequences were that (1) he mended the ventilator of the kitchen range; (2) he skinned a brace of rabbits for Miss Barnet, the cook; (3) he arranged to come next day and repair the clandestine devastations of the maids among the china.

He was pronounced to be a very agreeable young man.

Before luncheon (of which meal he partook in the kitchen) he had been consulted by Patsey Crimmeen about the chimney of the kennel boiler, had single-handed reduced it to submission, and had, in addition, boiled the meal for the hounds with a knowledge of proportion and an untiring devotion to the use of the potstick which produced 'stirabout' of a smoothness and excellence that Miss Barnet herself might have been proud of.

'You know, mother,' said Freddy that evening, 'you do want another chap in the garden badly.'

'Well, it's not so much the garden,' said Mrs. Alexander with alacrity, 'but I think he might be very useful to you, dear, and it's such a great matter his being a teetotaler, and he seems so fond of animals. I really feel we ought to try and make up to him somehow for the loss of his dog; though, indeed, a more deplorable object than that poor mangy dog I never saw!'

'All right: we'll put him in the back lodge, and we'll give him Bizzy as a watch dog. Won't we, Bizzy?' replied Freddy, dragging the somnolent Bismarck from out of the heart of the hearthrug, and accepting without repugnance the comprehensive lick that enveloped his chin.

From which it may be gathered that Mrs. Alexander and her son had fallen, like their household, under the fatal spell of the fascinating tinker.

At about the time that this conversation was taking place, Mr. Fennessy, having spent an evening of valedictory carouse with his tribe in the ruined cottage, was walking, somewhat unsteadily, towards the wood, dragging after him by a rope a large dog. He did not notice that he was being followed by a barefooted woman, but the dog did, and, being an intelligent dog, was in some degree reassured. In the wood the tinker spent some time in selecting a tree with a projecting branch suitable to his purpose, and having found one he proceeded to hang the dog. Even in his cups Mr. Fennessy made sentiment subservient to common sense.

It is hardly too much to say that in a week the tinker had taken up a position in the Craffroe household only comparable to that of Ygdrasil, who in Norse mythology forms the ultimate support of all things. Save for the incessant demands upon his skill in the matter of solder and stitches, his recent tinkerhood was politely ignored, or treated as an escapade excusable in a youth of spirit. Had not his father owned a farm and seven cows in the county Limerick, and had not he himself three times returned the price of his ticket to America to a circle of adoring and wealthy relatives in Boston? His position in the kitchen and yard became speedily assured. Under his *régime* the hounds were valeted as they had never been before. Lily herself (newly washed, with 'blue' in the water), was scarcely more white than the concrete floor of the kennel yard, and the puppies, Ruby and Remus, who had unaccountably developed a virulent form of mange, were immediately taken in hand by the all-accomplished tinker, and anointed with a mixture whose very noisomeness was to Patsey Crimmeen a sufficient guarantee of its efficacy, and was impressive even to the Master, fresh from much anxious study of veterinary lore.

'He's the best man we've got!' said Freddy proudly to a dubious uncle, 'there isn't a mortal thing he can't put his hand to.'

'Or lay his hands on,' suggested the dubious uncle. 'May I ask if his colleagues are still within a mile of the place?'

'Oh, he hates the very sight of 'em!' said Freddy hastily, 'cuts 'em dead whenever he sees 'em.'

'It's no use your crabbing him, George,' broke in Mrs. Alexander, 'we won't give him up to you! Wait till you see how he has mended the lock of the hall door!'

'I should recommend you to buy a new one at once,' said Sir George Ker, in a way that was singularly exasperating to the paragon's proprietors.

Mrs. Alexander was, or so her friends said, somewhat given to vaunting herself of her paragons, under which heading, it may be admitted, practically all her household were included. She was, indeed, one of those persons who may or may not be heroes to their valets, but whose valets are almost invariably heroes to them. It was, therefore, excessively discomposing to her that, during the following week, in the very height of apparently cloudless domestic tranquillity, the housemaid and the parlourmaid should, in one black hour, successively demand an audience, and successively, in the floods of tears proper to such occasions, give warning. Inquiry as to their reasons was fruitless. They were unhappy: one said she wouldn't get her appetite, and that her mother was sick; the other said she wouldn't get her sleep in it, and there was things—sob—going on—sob.

Mrs. Alexander concluded the interview abruptly, and descended to the kitchen to interview her queen paragon, Barnet, on the crisis.

Miss Barnet was a stout and comely English lady, of that liberal forty that frankly admits itself in advertisements to be twenty-eight. It was understood that she had only accepted office in Ireland because, in the first place, the butler to whom she had long been affianced had married another, and because, in the second place, she had a brother buried in Belfast. She was, perhaps, the one person in the world whose opinion about poultry Mrs. Alexander ranked higher than her own. She now allowed a restrained acidity to mingle with her dignity of manner, scarcely more than the calculated lemon essence in her faultless castle puddings, but enough to indicate that she, too, had grievances. *She* didn't know why they were leaving. She had heard some talk about a fairy or something, but she didn't hold with such nonsense.

'Gerrls is very frightful!' broke in an unexpected voice; 'owld standards like meself maybe wouldn't feel it!'

A large basket of linen had suddenly blocked the scullery

IT WHIPPED AWAY UP THE STAIRS

door, and from beneath it a little woman, like an Australian aborigine, delivered herself of this dark saying.

'What are you talking about, Mrs. Griffen?' demanded Mrs. Alexander, turning in vexed bewilderment to her laundress, 'what does all this mean?'

'The Lord save us, ma'am, there's some says it means a death in the house!' replied Mrs. Griffen with unabated cheerfulness, 'an' indeed 'twas no blame for the little gerrls to be frightened an' they meetin' it in the passages——'

'Meeting *what?*' interrupted her mistress. Mrs. Griffen was an old and privileged retainer, but there were limits even for Mrs. Griffen.

'Sure, ma'am, there's no one knows what was in it,' returned Mrs. Griffen, 'but whatever it was they heard it goin' on before them always in the panthry passage, an' it walkin' as sthrong as a man. It whipped away up the stairs, and they seen the big snout snorting out at them through the banisters, and a bare back on it the same as a pig; and the two cheeks on it as white as yer own, and away with it! And with that Mary Anne got a wakeness, and only for Willy Fennessy bein' in the kitchen an' ketching a hold of her, she'd have cracked her head on the range, the crayture!'

Here Barnet smiled with ineffable contempt. 'What I'm tellin' them is,' continued Mrs. Griffen, warming with her subject, 'maybe that thing was a pairson that's dead, an' might be owin' a pound to another one, or has something that way on his soul, an' it's in the want o' some one that'll ax it what's throublin' it. The like o' thim couldn't spake till ye'll spake to thim first. But, sure, gerrls has no courage——'

Barnet's smile was again one of wintry superiority.

'Willie Fennessy and Patsey Crimmeen was afther seein' it too last night,' went on Mrs. Griffen, 'an' poor Willie was as much frightened! he said surely 'twas a ghost. On the back avenue it was, an' one minute 'twas as big as an ass, an' another minute it'd be no bigger than a bonnive——'

'Oh, the Lord save us!' wailed the kitchenmaid irrepressibly from the scullery.

'I shall speak to Fennessy myself about this,' said Mrs. Alexander, making for the door with concentrated purpose, 'and in the meantime I wish to hear no more of this rubbish.'

'I'm sure Fennessy wishes to hear no more of it,' said Barnet, acridly, to Mrs. Griffen when Mrs. Alexander had passed swiftly out of hearing, 'after the way those girls have been

worryin' on at him about it all the morning. Such a set out!'

Mrs. Griffen groaned in a polite and general way, and behind Barnet's back put her tongue out of the corner of her mouth and winked at the kitchenmaid.

Mrs. Alexander found her conversation with Willy Fennessy less satisfactory than usual. He could not give any definite account of what he and Patsey had seen: maybe they'd seen nothing at all; maybe—as an obvious impromptu—it was the calf of the Kerry cow; whatever was in it, it was little he'd mind it, and, in easy dismissal of the subject, would the misthress be against his building a bit of a coalshed at the back of the lodge while she was away?

That evening a new terror was added to the situation. Jimmy the boot-boy, on his return from taking the letters to the evening post, fled in panic into the kitchen, and having complied with the etiquette invariable in such cases by having 'a wakeness,' he described to a deeply sympathetic audience how he had seen something that was like a woman in the avenue, and he had called to it and it returned him no answer, and how he had then asked it three times what was it, and it soaked away into the trees from him, and then there came something rushing in on him and grunting at him to bite him, and he was full sure it was the Fairy Pig from Lough Clure.

Day by day the legend grew, thickened by tales of lights that had been seen moving mysteriously in the woods of Craffroe. Even the hounds were subpœnaed as witnesses; Patsey Crimmeen's mother stating that for three nights after Patsey seen that Thing they were singing and screeching to each other all night.

Had Mrs. Crimmeen used the verb scratch instead of screech she would have been nearer the mark. The puppies, Ruby and Remus, had, after the manner of the young, human and canine, not failed to distribute their malady among their elders, and the pack, straitly coupled, went for dismal constitutionals, and the kennels reeked to heaven of remedies, and Freddy's new hunter, Mayboy, from shortness of work, smashed the partition of the loose box and kicked his neighbour, Mrs. Alexander's cob, in the knee.

'The worst of it is,' said Freddy confidentially to his ally and adviser, the junior subaltern of the detachment at Enniscar, who had come over to see the hounds, 'that I'm afraid Patsey Crimmeen—the boy whom I'm training to whip to me, you

know'—(as a matter of fact, the Whip was a year older than the Master)—'is beginning to drink a bit. When I came down here before breakfast this mornin'—when Freddy was feeling more acutely than usual his position as an M.F.H., he cut his g's and talked slightly through his nose, even, on occasion, going so far as to omit the aspirate in talking of his hounds—'there wasn't a sign of him—kennel door not open or anything. I let the poor brutes out into the run. I tell you, what with the paraffin and the carbolic and everything the kennel was pretty high——'

'It's pretty thick now,' said his friend, lighting a cigarette.

'Well, I went into the boiler-house,' continued Freddy impressively, 'and there he was, asleep on the floor, with his beastly head on my kennel coat, and one leg in the feeding trough!'

Mr. Taylour made a suitable ejaculation.

'I jolly soon kicked him on to his legs,' went on Freddy, 'not that they were much use to him—he must have been on the booze all night. After that I went on to the stable yard, and if you'll believe me, the two chaps there had never turned up at all—at half-past eight, mind you!—and there was Fennessy doing up the horses. He said he believed that there'd been a wake down at Enniscar last night. I thought it was rather decent of him doing their work for them.'

'You'll sack 'em, I suppose?' remarked Mr. Taylour, with martial severity.

'Oh well, I don't know,' said Mr. Alexander evasively, 'I'll see. Anyhow, don't say anything to my mother about it; a drunken man is like a red rag to a bull to her.'

Taking this peculiarity of Mrs. Alexander into consideration, it was perhaps as well that she left Craffroe a few days afterwards to stay with her brother. The evening before left both the Fairy Pig and the Ghost Woman were seen again on the avenue, this time by the coachman, who came into the kitchen considerably the worse for liquor and announced the fact, and that night the household duties were performed by the maids in pairs, and even, when possible, in trios.

As Mrs. Alexander said at dinner to Sir George, on the evening of her arrival, she was thankful to have abandoned the office of Ghostly Comforter to her domestics. Only for Barnet she couldn't have left poor Freddy to the mercy of that pack of fools; in fact, even with Barnet to look after them, it was impossible to tell what imbecility they were not capable of.

'Well, if you like,' said Sir George, 'I might run you over there on the motor car some day to see how they're all getting on. If Freddy is going to hunt on Friday, we might go on to Craffroe after seeing the fun.'

The topic of Barnet was here shelved in favour of automobiles. Mrs. Alexander's brother was also a person of enthusiasms.

But what were these enthusiasms compared to the deep-seated ecstasy of Freddy Alexander as in his new pink coat he rode down the main street of Enniscar, Patsey in equal splendour bringing up the rear, unspeakably conscious of the jibes of his relatives and friends. There was a select field, consisting of Mr. Taylour, four farmers, some young ladies on bicycles, and about two dozen young men and boys on foot, who, in order to be prepared for all contingencies, had provided themselves with five dogs, two horns, and a ferret. It is, after all, impossible to please everybody, and from the cyclists' and foot people's point of view the weather left nothing to be desired. The sun shone like a glistering shield in the light blue November sky, the roads were like iron, the wind, what there was of it, like steel. There was a line of white on the northerly side of the fences, that yielded grudgingly and inch by inch before the march of the pale sunshine: the new pack could hardly have had a more unfavourable day for their *début*.

The new Master was, however, wholly undaunted by such crumples in the rose-leaf. He was riding Mayboy, a big trustworthy horse, whose love of jumping had survived a month of incessant and arbitrary schooling, and he left the road as soon as was decently possible, and made a line across country for the covert that involved as much jumping as could reasonably be hoped for in half a mile. At the second fence Patsey Crimmeen's black mare put her nose in the air and swung round; Patsey's hands seemed to be at their worst this morning, and what their worst felt like the black mare alone knew. Mr. Taylour, as Deputy Whip, waltzed erratically round the nine couple on a very flippant polo pony; and the four farmers, who had wisely adhered to the road, reached the covert sufficiently in advance of the hunt to frustrate Lily's project of running sheep in a neighbouring field.

The covert was a large, circular enclosure, crammed to the very top of its girdling bank with furze-bushes, bracken, low hazel, and stunted Scotch firs. Its primary idea was woodcock, its second rabbits; beaters were in the habit of getting through

it somehow, but a ride feasible for fox hunters had never so much as occurred to it. Into this, with practical assistance from the country boys, the deeply reluctant hounds were pitched and flogged ; Freddy very nervously uplifted his voice in falsetto encouragement, feeling much as if he were starting the solo of an anthem ; and Mr. Taylour and Patsey, the latter having made it up with the black mare, galloped away with professional ardour to watch different sides of the covert. This, during the next hour, they had ample opportunities for doing. After the first outburst of joy from the hounds on discovering that there were rabbits in the covert, and after the retirement of the rabbits to their burrows on the companion discovery that there were hounds in it, a silence, broken only by the far-away prattle of the lady bicyclists on the road, fell round Freddy Alexander. He bore it as long as he could, cheering with faltering whoops the invisible and unresponsive pack, and wondering what on earth huntsmen were expected to do on such occasions ; then, filled with that horrid conviction which assails the lonely watcher, that the hounds have slipped away at the far side, he put spurs to Mayboy, and cantered down the long flank of the covert to find some one or something. Nothing had happened on the north side, at all events, for there was the faithful Taylour, pirouetting on his hilltop in the eye of the wind. Two fields more (in one of which he caught his first sight of any of the hounds, in the shape of Ruby, carefully rolling on a dead crow), and then, under the lee of a high bank, he came upon Patsey Crimmeen, the farmers, and the country boys, absorbed in the contemplation of a fight between Tiger, the butcher's brindled cŭr, and Watty, the kennel terrier.

The manner in which Mr. Alexander dispersed this entertainment showed that he was already equipped with one important qualification of a Master of Hounds—a temper laid on like gas, ready to blaze at a moment's notice. He pitched himself off his horse and scrambled over the bank into the covert in search of his hounds. He pushed his way through briars and furze-bushes, and suddenly, near the middle of the wood, he caught sight of them. They were in a small group, they were very quiet and very busy. As a matter of fact they were engaged in eating a dead sheep.

After this episode, there ensued a long and disconsolate period of wandering from one bleak hillside to another, at the bidding of various informants, in search of apocryphal foxes, slaughterers of flocks of equally apocryphal geese and turkeys,

—such a day as is discreetly ignored in all hunting annals, and, like the easterly wind that is its parent, is neither good for man nor beast.

By half-past three hope had died, even in the sanguine bosoms of the Master and Mr. Taylour. Two of the farmers had disappeared, and the lady bicyclists, with faces lavender blue from waiting at various windy cross roads, had long since fled away to lunch. Two of the hounds were limping; all, judging by their expressions, were on the verge of tears. Patsey's black mare had lost two shoes; Mr. Taylour's pony had ceased to pull, and was too dispirited even to try to kick the hounds, and the country boys had dwindled to four. There had come a time when Mr. Taylour had sunk so low as to suggest that a drag should be run with the assistance of the ferret's bag, a scheme only frustrated by the regrettable fact that the ferret and its owner had gone home.

'Well, we had a nice bit of schooling, anyhow, and it's been a real educational day for the hounds,' said Freddy, turning in his saddle to look at the fires of the frosty sunset. 'I'm glad they had it. I think we're in for a go of hard weather. I don't know what I should have done only for you, old chap. Patsey's gone all to pieces: it's my belief he's been on the drink this whole week, and where he gets it——'

'Hullo! Hold hard!' interrupted Mr. Taylour. 'What's Governor after?'

They were riding along a grass-grown farm road outside the Craffroe demesne; the grey wall made a sharp bend to the right, and just at the corner Governor had begun to gallop, with his nose to the ground and his stern up. The rest of the pack joined him in an instant, and all swung round the corner and were lost to sight.

'It's a fox!' exclaimed Freddy, snatching up his reins; 'they always cross into the demesne just here!'

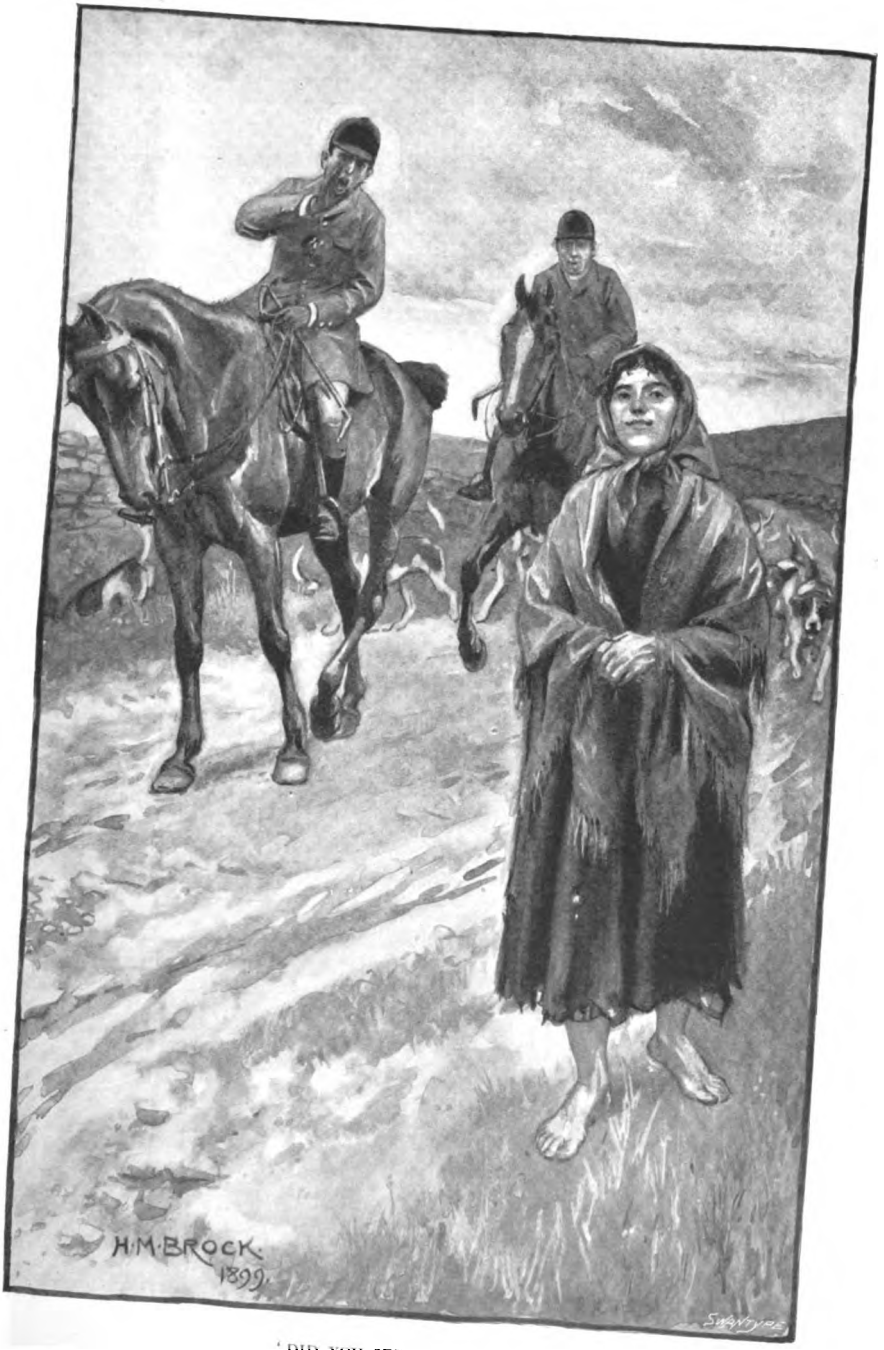
By the time he and Mr. Taylour were round the corner the hounds had checked fifty yards ahead, and were eagerly hunting to and fro for the lost scent, and a little farther down the old road they saw a woman running away from them.

'Hi, ma'am!' bellowed Freddy, 'did you see the fox?'

The woman made no answer.

'Did you see the fox?' reiterated Freddy in still more stentorian tones. 'Can't you answer me?'

The woman continued to run without even looking behind her.



'DID YOU SEE THE FOX?'

The laughter of Mr. Taylour added fuel to the fire of Freddy's wrath: he put the spurs into Mayboy, dashed after the woman, pulled his horse across the road in front of her, and shouted his question point blank at her, coupled with a warm inquiry as to whether she had a tongue in her head.

The woman jumped backwards as if she were shot, staring in horror at Freddy's furious little face, then touched her mouth and ears and began to jabber inarticulately and talk on her fingers.

The laughter of Mr. Taylour was again plainly audible.

'Sure that's a dummy woman, sir,' explained the butcher's nephew, hurrying up. 'I think she's one of them tinkers that's outside the town.' Then with a long screech, 'Look! Look over! Tiger, have it! Hulla, hulla, hulla!'

Tiger was already over the wall and into the demesne, neck and neck with Fly, the smith's half-bred greyhound; and in the wake of these champions clambered the Craffroe Pack, with strangled yelps of ardour, leaving Remus and three town curs in the road, striving and squealing and fighting horribly in the endeavour to scramble up the tall smooth face of the wall.

'The gate! The gate farther on!' yelled Freddy, thundering down the turfy road, with the earth flying up in lumps from his horse's hoofs.

Mr. Taylour's pony gave two most uncomfortable bucks and ran away; even Patsey Crimmeen and the black mare shared an unequal thrill of enthusiasm, as the latter, wholly out of hand, bucketed after the pony.

The afternoon was very cold, a fact thoroughly realised by Mrs. Alexander, on the front seat of Sir George's motor-car, in spite of enveloping furs, and of Bismarck, curled like a fried whiting, in her lap. The grey road rushed smoothly backwards under the broad tyres; golden and green plover whistled in the quiet fields, starlings and huge missel thrushes burst from the wayside trees as the 'Bollée,' uttering that hungry whine that indicates the desire of such creatures to devour space, tore past. Mrs. Alexander wondered if birds' beaks felt as cold as her nose after they had been cleaving the air for an afternoon; at all events, she reflected, they had not the consolation of tea to look forward to. Barnet was sure to have some of her best hot cakes ready for Freddy when he came home from hunting. Mrs. Alexander and Sir George had been scouring the roads

since a very early lunch in search of the hounds, and her mind reposed on the thought of the hot cakes.

The front lodge gates stood wide open, the motor-car curved its flight and skimmed through. Halfway up the avenue they whizzed past three policemen, one of whom was carrying on his back a strange and wormlike thing.

'Janet,' called out Sir George, 'you've been caught making potheen! They've got the worm of a still there.'

'They're only making a short cut through the place from the bog; I'm delighted they've found it!' screamed back Mrs. Alexander.

The 'Bollée' was at the hall door in another minute, and the mistress of the house pulled the bell with numbed fingers. There was no response.

'Better go round to the kitchen,' suggested her brother. 'You'll find they're talking too hard to hear the bell.'

His sister took the advice, and a few minutes afterwards she opened the hall door with an extremely perturbed countenance.

'I can't find a creature anywhere,' she said, 'either upstairs or down—I can't understand Barnet leaving the house empty——'

'Listen!' interrupted Sir George, 'isn't that the hounds?'

They listened.

'They're hunting down by the back avenue; come on, Janet!'

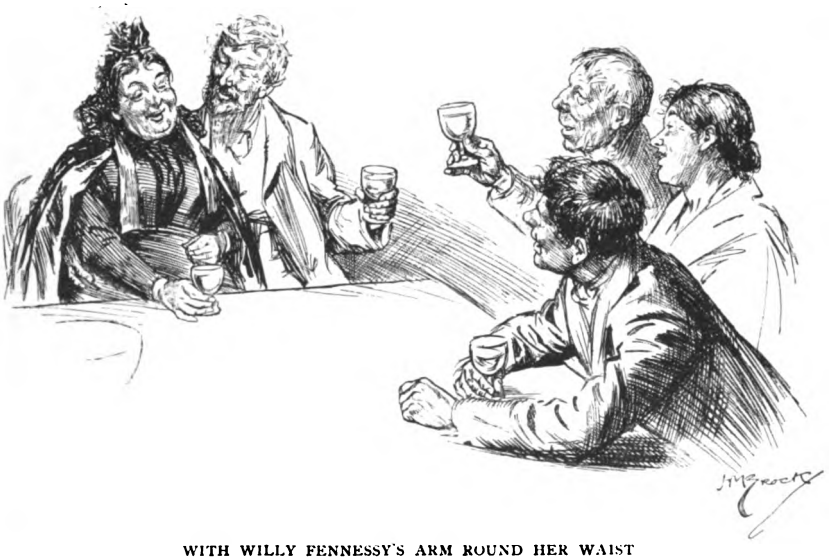
The motor-car took to flight again; it sped, soft-footed, through the twilight gloom of the back avenue, while a disjointed, travelling clamour of hounds came nearer and nearer through the woods. The motor-car was within a hundred yards of the back lodge, when out of the rhododendron-bush burst a spectral black-and-white dog, with floating fringes of ragged wool and hideous bald patches on its back.

'Fennessy's dog!' ejaculated Mrs. Alexander, falling back in her seat.

Probably Bismarck never enjoyed anything in his life as much as the all too brief moment in which, leaning from his mistress's lap in the prow of the flying 'Bollée,' he barked hysterically in the wake of the piebald dog, who, in all its dolorous career, had never before had the awful experience of being chased by a motor-car. It darted in at the open door of the lodge; the pursuers pulled up outside. There were paraffin lamps in the windows, the open door was garlanded with evergreens; from it proceeded loud and hilarious voices and the

jerky strains of a concertina. Mrs. Alexander, with all her most cherished convictions toppling on their pedestals, stood in the open doorway and stared, unable to believe the testimony of her own eyes. Was that the immaculate Barnet seated at the head of a crowded table, in her—Mrs. Alexander's—very best bonnet and velvet cape, with a glass of steaming potheen punch in her hand, and Willy Fennessy's arm round her waist?

The glass sank from the paragon's lips, the arm of Mr. Fennessy fell from her waist; the circle of servants, tinkers, and



WITH WILLY FENNESSY'S ARM ROUND HER WAIST

country people vainly tried to efface themselves behind each other.

'Barnet!' said Mrs. Alexander in an awful voice, and even in that moment she appreciated with an added pang the feathery beauty of a slice of Barnet's sponge-cake in the grimy fist of a tinker.

'Mrs. Fennessy, m'm, if you please,' replied Barnet, with a dignity that, considering the bonnet and cape, was highly creditable to her strength of character.

At this point a hand dragged Mrs. Alexander backwards from the doorway, a barefooted woman hustled past her into the house, slammed the door in her face, and Mrs. Alexander found herself in the middle of the hounds.

'We'd give you the brush, Mrs. Alexander,' said Mr. Taylour, as he flogged solidly all round him in the dusk, 'but as the

other lady seems to have gone to ground with the fox I suppose she'll take it!'

. . . . .

Mrs. Fennessy paid out of her own ample savings the fines inflicted upon her husband for potheen-making and selling drink in the Craffroe gate lodge without a licence, and she shortly afterwards took him to America.

Mrs. Alexander's friends professed themselves as being not in the least surprised to hear that she had installed the afflicted Miss Fennessy (sister to the late occupant) and her scarcely less afflicted companion, the Fairy Pig, in her back lodge. Miss Fennessy, being deaf and dumb, is not perhaps a paragon lodge-keeper, but having, like her brother, been brought up in a work-house kitchen, she has taught Patsey Crimmeen how to boil stirabout *à merveille.*

RACING—PAST AND FUTURE

BY ALFRED E. T. WATSON

ON multitudes of hoardings, there used to be a picture of an innocent infant, with the legend beneath him, 'What will he become?' He had two courses open to him, according, as far as I could make out, to whether he did or did not learn to read and study somebody's Encyclopædia. If he did this, he would become an industrious (if somewhat priggish-looking) clerk, a respectable middle-aged man, and a veteran in easy circumstances. If he did not, he would go to the bad, take to drink —or so I judge from his likeness—and be left well on his way to the workhouse. When I look at a foal, this poster always recurs to my mind. What will he become? Shall we see him some morning on the Limekilns, or elsewhere, gallantly winning his trial from a plater of fair reputation? Shall we find him afterwards cantering down to the post for the New Stakes at Ascot, to the admiration of his friends who confidently announce to all enquirers that they do not think he can be beaten? Will he afterwards be seen passing the Bell at Epsom, his jockey sitting still, whilst whips are raised and cracking around and behind him? Will he renew acquaintance with Ascot by sweeping past the Stands ahead of his field for the Gold Cup; and subsequently shall we meet him being led about the roads in charge of an attendant, who is proud to announce the horse's name to enquirers who do not recognise him, and are struck by the symmetry of his make and shape? Or shall we, very much on the other hand, discover when he comes to be galloped that he cannot sustain his attractive, easy action for more than three furlongs? Will he afflict his former admirers by running badly in a Plate, winner to be sold for

50 sovereigns? Shall we recognise him carrying a faded jacket over hurdles in a Selling Handicap; and last scene of all which ends this strange eventful history, will he drag us down Piccadilly some night in a ramshackle four-wheeler? If horses could know what different fates awaited them, I fancy that some, who now decline to give their running, would certainly put heart into their work!

These reflections are called forth by an inspection of a number of young animals, who when this issue of the magazine appears will have become two-year-olds; for another season is upon us. Very soon we shall begin to hear what is fancied for the Brocklesby, and soon after the race has been run we shall be wondering about the value of the form.

Hulcot, who won last year for Mr. Leopold de Rothschild, was, I suppose, of about average merit; for though he has not won a race since, he was complimented by being kept up tolerably high in Nurseries, and his popular owner has more than once been tolerably confident of his success. It is extraordinary with what correctness the chances are estimated of these young animals that have not been out before. The favourites last year for the Brocklesby were Hulcot 2 to 1, Styria 9 to 4, Crow Tenter 7 to 1; and they finished first, second and third in that order. The 'big' horses were of course, at this time, the subject of much speculation. There was no reason, indeed, to suppose that Flying Fox was quite, or in fact was anything like, the really good horse we now know him to be; for Caiman had beaten him in the Middle Park Plate, and St. Gris had been a short head in front of him in the Imperial Produce Stakes at Kempton Park. It was supposed also that between St. Gris and Trident there might not be much to choose; and enthusiasts across the Channel declared that Holocauste was certain to beat the lot. As readers of my 'Notes' would have seen at the time, this was not the view I myself held. In December 1898—I hope I may be excused for this mild little solo of my own trumpet—I wrote 'It was rather a blow to insular pride to find the American Caiman at the top of the Free Handicap, set down by impartial authority as the best two-year-old of the season. I fancy John Porter knew better than this. If a match were made between Caiman and Flying Fox, I have little doubt that the Kingsclere horse would be a warm favourite, and I should confidently expect to see him win;' and in May of last year (after, I must admit, expressing some doubts as to whether Flying Fox was really a 'smasher') when

J. WATTS AND J. RIEFF CANTERING TO THE POST

we were hearing the most extraordinary stories of what the French colt could do, I wrote 'It will not surprise me to find that if six weeks hence Holocauste is sent to Epsom, Flying Fox will beat him.'

As for St. Gris, it appeared early in the season that he was not the animal his friends fondly supposed. He came out in the Column Produce Stakes, at the Craven Meeting, and failed to give 8 lb. to Mr. Wallace Johnstone's Harrow, who, in the hands of Mornington Cannon, beat him easily by two lengths, with the Duke of Devonshire's Millennium, receiving 12 lb. from Harrow, behind St. Gris. I do not suppose that Harrow will ever draw the cab I have been talking about; in point of fact I may say I am quite sure he will not do so; but all the same he has certainly missed his chances in life. Last October, when he and Millennium again met, this time at even weights, the little rogue, quite at his best, round and sound as a horse could be, would scarcely canter home, though at Goodwood he had again beaten Millennium 'anyhow.'

Three of the animals that have been so much discussed during the winter met in the Two Thousand Guineas, Flying Fox, Caiman and Trident; and the Duke of Westminster's son of Orme and Vampire simply, as the phrase goes, 'squandered' his field. Captain Greer's Birkenhead had been so well tried that his friends fancied him greatly, even in the face of this opposition, but he was only an indifferent fourth. The two lengths by which Flying Fox won might have been twenty if Mornington Cannon had sent him along from the Bushes, but he cantered home at his ease, Trident three lengths behind Caiman, who was second. At this period Domine II. was declared to be almost if not quite as good as Caiman, and he came out next day in the Chippenham Stakes, where Harrow, who ran gamely this time in the hands of John Watts, had a neck the best of him. The Americans, however, were to enjoy their revenge in the One Thousand, for here Sibola had things all her own way, with Fascination and Musa second and third.

It was considered doubtful whether a good two-year-old had so far been seen, but the Royal Two Year Old Plate of 2400 sovereigns at Kempton attracted a field of young animals, from whom much was hoped. Lord Rosebery's sons of Ladas, an exceptionally good-looking lot, were said to be as good as their appearance suggested, and Bonnie Lad was one of the starters here. Lord William Beresford's Democrat was another animal

that came to Kempton with a high reputation ; but the prize fell to the smart little Emotion, whom Mr. James Russel had bought for a very small sum, Democrat finishing three lengths behind her, Bonnie Lad four lengths off, third. Doubts were expressed, and apparently with reason, as to whether any of these were really good, and the form certainly did not look brilliant when a few days later, Sonatura, who had only been fifth for the Brocklesby, beat Emotion by two lengths in the Somerville Stakes at the Newmarket Second Spring Meeting.

If there were no good two-year-olds, it now began to be apparent that Flying Fox was a really good three. He had won an extraordinarily high trial at Kingsclere, showing himself a long way better than the four-year-old Batt, to whom it was said he had given 3 lb. and a beating which meant a great many pounds more ; Royal Emblem and Frontier (Frontier had won the Dewhurst Plate the previous October, beating Caiman, from whom, however, he was receiving 10 lb.) being found a good two stone inferior to the winner of the Two Thousand ; and what was thought of Flying Fox is proved by the fact that when he went to Epsom, in the face of all that was said of Holocauste whom Sloan had been specially engaged to ride, odds of five to two were laid on him. For some reason not quite easy to understand, though Flying Fox won the Derby by two lengths, he did not do so in the style which has characterised all his other three-year-old races. An idea prevailed that he did not stay ; it was thought that Holocauste did so, and Sloan's instructions were to make all possible use of the grey son of Le Sancy. He certainly rode to orders. As they approached Tattenham Corner, Sloan was driving his horse, with Flying Fox cantering by his side. Shrewd judges in France had maintained that Holocauste would not act down the hill ; in my opinion he was beaten before the descent began ; and though Sloan declared afterwards that he should have won had Holocauste not broken down, every one who saw the race, and had the faintest knowledge of racing, must have perceived that the statement was absurd. Holocauste broke his leg badly, and a distinguished French veterinary surgeon stated his opinion that the mischief which led to the fracture originated in the last race he had run in France, so that he was not sound when he started. How this may be it is impossible to say ; one can only record what one sees, and certainly as the race was run Holocauste was out of it half a mile from home. Excuses for Flying Fox were made to the effect that he hesitated when he found Holocauste no longer by

his side, but at any rate it is the only time this year that we have seen Mornington Cannon raise his whip on the horse. His victory was of course never really in doubt, but neither Damocles who was second, nor Innocence who was third, has won a race since, and it is strange that Flying Fox should have been called upon to make any sort of effort to beat such a pair. Lord William Beresford entertained the idea that the Oaks was quite as good a thing for Sibola as the Derby had been for the Kingsclere colt, and the betting before the race was '10 to 1 bar 1.' Sloan, however, rode very badly, and Musa reversed the One Thousand Guineas running, beating the American filly by a head. That the running was altogether wrong, subsequent events have proved.

Going on to Ascot, Democrat, who had thrice been defeated, was at length to get his head in front. He came out in the Coventry Stakes, the favourite for which was the Prince of Wales' colt Diamond Jubilee, who had been tried more than 21 lb. better than Simonswood, a good second to Bonarosa for the Woodcote Stakes at Epsom; and as Bonarosa was then believed to be in or near the first class, it was supposed that the brother to Persimmon could not be beaten. These suppositions are often very expensive, and this was a case in point. Whatever Diamond Jubilee's capacity may be his temper has to be reckoned with; he declined to gallop, leaving Democrat to finish a length in front of Vain Duchess, a daughter of Isinglass, who had already done credit to Mr. McCalmont's horse by winning a couple of races, and who finished a neck in advance of M. E. Blanc's Lucie II., a French-bred daughter of Melton, recognised as quite the best of her age in France.

On the first day of Ascot, Mr. Rose's Cyllene had taken an exercise canter in the Forty-Fifth Triennial Stakes, and he came out on Thursday for the Gold Cup, opposed by the French colt Gardefeu, who after winning the French Derby and other good races as a three-year-old had this year started four times and been four times successful. Lord Edward II. and Herminius were also in the field, so that Cyllene had no easy task. Nevertheless he accomplished it with the utmost ease. At the end of this tiring two and a half miles Cyllene appeared as fresh as when he started, and literally 'romped' home when S. Loates let him out at the distance, finishing eight lengths in front of Lord Edward, who was three lengths in front of Gardefeu. Herminius broke down, and the same may be said of Cyllene, for he was never able to stand a subsequent preparation, nor

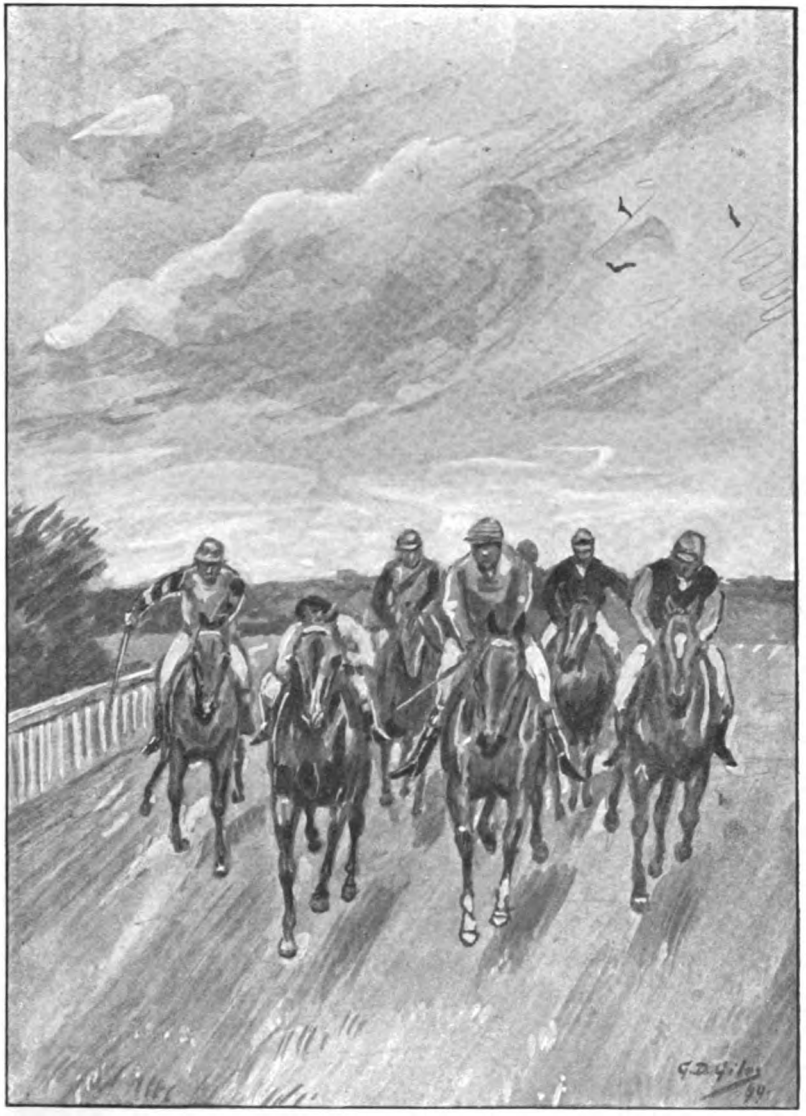
has Lord Edward II. ever since been seen on a race-course. These may be set down as additions to the long list of good horses who have been victims to the hard going at Ascot.

Diamond Jubilee had done so well between Ascot and the First July Meeting at Newmarket that his friends once more adopted the fatal delusion as to the impossibility of his being beaten in the July Stakes. He could not have had a stronger, more patient, or more determined jockey than Watts; but this accomplished horseman could do nothing with him. Diamond Jubilee behaved like a mad horse at the post, and after performing every possible iniquity, was hopelessly beaten in the race, which fell to Mr. Wallace Johnstone's Captain Kettle. In the light of subsequent form the result seems altogether upside-down, for Galveston, who was afterwards found running unsuccessfully in selling races, was second, beaten only a neck, and the Duke of Portland's Alt-na-bea, who has never been near winning a race since, was third; behind them was Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's Athara, who won the Chesterfield Stakes at the Second July and has on other occasions shown some form. Bonarosa was last but one—Diamond Jubilee.

Flying Fox was to come out for the Princess of Wales' Stakes, for which his most dangerous rivals were supposed to be Prince Soltykoff's Ninus, who had a considerable advantage in the weights, and Birkenhead, whose friends were again hopeful, as he was receiving 17 lb. from the Derby winner. Flying Fox, however, had things all his own way from start to finish, winning as his jockey liked—and this time he thought three lengths would be enough—from his stable companion Royal Emblem, who was receiving 17 lb. and received also about a 17 lb. beating. Birkenhead was fourth, or rather, ran a dead heat for fourth place with Boniface, behind Ninus. How highly Flying Fox's friends estimated the horse may be gathered from the fact that, in spite of the manifest inferiority of Royal Emblem, when that colt came out for the Lingfield Park Stakes of 3000 sovs., odds of 6 to 4 were laid on the son of Royal Hampton and Thistle. Sibola was in the race, but she had to give Royal Emblem 11 lb., irrespective of sex allowance, and she was a good second favourite at 3 to 1. This, however, was one of Harrow's going days, and, ridden by S. Loates, he won by a length and a half from the American filly (Harrow 8 st. 10 lb., Sibola 8 st. 13 lb.) in the quickest time ever made in England or America, the mile being covered in 1 minute $35\frac{3}{5}$ seconds. Royal Emblem and Boniface were

unplaced, Sinopi, who had beaten Harrow at Sandown (on one of his non-going days) being third.

It had now become altogether unmistakable what sort of a



AT THE DISTANCE

horse Flying Fox was, and the position was exactly appreciated when odds of 100 to 14 were laid on him at Sandown Park for the Eclipse Stakes. Ninus seemed tolerably certain to be

second, but the Duke of Westminster carried off more than the lion's share of the spoil, as his Frontier beat Ninus in their places. There was more interest about the National Breeders' Produce Stakes of 5000 sovs. next day. Mr. Dewar's Forfarshire had been so highly tried that it was believed Democrat had no chance, or at any rate a very small one, of giving him 9 lb., though it should be added that Democrat's stable did not share this belief. The result of the race seemed to leave the question undecided. Democrat won by a neck ; but Forfarshire was so hopelessly hampered that his chance was absolutely extinguished. It was in the next race but one that the persistent disobedience of certain prominent jockeys at last wore out the ultra-Job-like patience of Mr. Arthur Coventry, with the result that Sloan, Robinson and Dalton were suspended for several weeks.

All this time the search for a good two-year-old had been continued, and it was thought that one had been found in Simon Dale, a son of St. Simon and Ismay, belonging to the Duke of Portland. Only The Gorgon opposed him in the Ham Stakes at Goodwood, which he won easily enough. It was proclaimed, on somewhat insufficient evidence, that he was the best colt out, and when Mr. Brassey's Winifreda, an hour afterwards, fulfilled the expectation of her friends by winning the Richmond Stakes, it was declared that the best filly had also been discovered. As she has never run since it is impossible to say what this daughter of St. Simon and Melody may be. In the Free Handicap for Two-Year-Olds she was set down as the best of her year, and of course the handicapper may be right.

A couple of days later Diamond Jubilee once more came out, in the Prince of Wales' Stakes, and was once more declared to be invincible. Mornington Cannon had been specially retained to ride him ; but the colt would not run his race out, and let himself be beaten by Lord Rosebery's Epsom Lad. Curiosity to see more of Simon Dale was gratified in the Champagne Stakes at Doncaster. Democrat was a hot favourite at 2 to 1 on, 5 to 2 being laid against Simon Dale, and they fought out a hard finish, in which the American had a head the best, though the race was held to be unsatisfactory and friends of both declared that their choice 'ought to have won.' The St. Leger created slightly more excitement than might have been expected, for the reason that though 7 to 2 was laid on Flying Fox, there were found persons ready to take 4 to 1 about Caiman. The Duke of Westminst[illegible] an animal with a

curious disposition, evinced a marked disinclination to join his horses after a breakaway in which Mornington Cannon smashed a spur, and Flying Fox had to be coaxed back to the starting-post with bits of grass picked up on the course. When once the flag fell, however, the race was never for a moment in doubt. His trainer and jockey knew well that Flying Fox was a stayer, a fact which had been generally doubted ; Mornington Cannon indulged him by letting him stride away, which he did practically from start to finish, winning in a canter by three lengths from Caiman, next to whom was Scintillant, against whom 300 to 1 were the quoted odds. It was the first time during the year that Mr. Oswald's colt had chosen to gallop, and as he was in the Cesarewitch with 6 st. 3 lb. it became evident what was likely to happen at Newmarket if he showed the same willingness when the long-distance Handicap was run. That he had turned over a new leaf was demonstrated in the Twenty-first Great Foal Stakes at the Newmarket First October Meeting, for though he had little to beat he won in a canter, and it may at once be said he carried off the Cesarewitch, as it was thought he would do the Cambridgeshire also ; but this hope was not justified, his trainer's excuse being that the distance was not far enough for him.

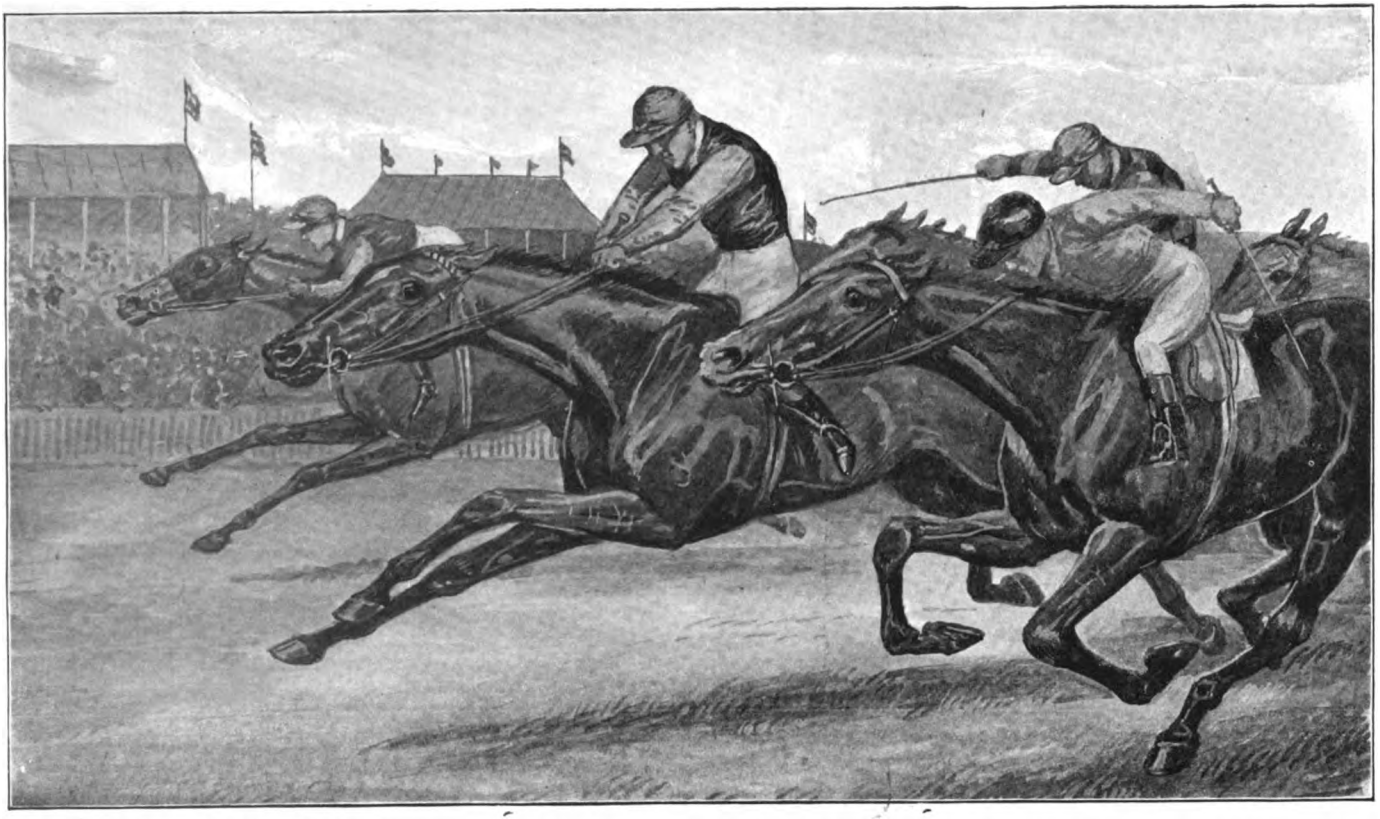
Another confirmed rogue was to win a race the day after Scintillant's first victory. This was Diamond Jubilee, who just got home in the Boscawen Stakes by the shortest of short heads from Mr. Wallace Johnstone's Paigle—own sister to Harrow (by Orme—Lady Primrose) who had carried off the Fulbourne Stakes in July. The last appearance for the season of Flying Fox took place next afternoon, when with odds of 8 to 1 on him he cantered home for the Jockey Club Stakes, Scintillant second. The six races Flying Fox won during the year amounted in value to £37,415, which with last year's stakes makes a total so far of £40,090 won by him, and all being well with the colt, it seems tolerably certain that he will largely exceed the £57,185 won by Isinglass, the 'record' hitherto.

In the Imperial Stakes at Kempton Park, Forfarshire and Democrat were to resume their battle, and this time, instead of Democrat giving him 9 lb., he was receiving 3 lb. Ample justification for the excuse that had been made for Forfarshire was forthcoming, as though he seemed to be hopelessly shut in till very near home, S. Loates pulled round behind the leaders in the nick of time, and, going a tremendous pace at the finish, beat Democrat a head. The value of this was suggested by

Democrat's subsequent victories in the Middle Park Plate and the Dewhurst. In the former of these he got badly away and had to make up his ground with great rapidity in order to beat Diamond Jubilee by half a length. He accomplished his task much more easily in the Dewhurst, for though the verdict was only three quarters of a length, it might have been increased. There were only three runners in the Dewhurst Plate, the first, second, and third in the Middle Park, Democrat, Diamond Jubilee, and Goblet, and they finished in the same order. It can only be regretted that Irish Ivy, who won the Cambridgeshire very easily indeed, was not engaged in the 'Classic' races, as she is doubtless a very good mare.

The best three-year-olds thus appear to be Forfarshire, Democrat, and Diamond Jubilee, as indeed the maker of the Free Handicap has stated his opinion; while the best of the fillies, according to the same authority, is Winifreda, who is supposed to be 12 lb. behind Forfarshire, and 4 lb. better than Paigle. The three colts named are all in the Derby—Goblet is not, nor is Elopement (Right Away—Maid of Love), the best three-year-old at Kingsclere—and will doubtless be favourites when betting begins, for Simon Dale's character appears to be quite lost: he was in the Free Handicap at more than a stone behind Forfarshire. This last undoubtedly has wonderful speed; but there is a suspicion of flashiness about him; he may not stay; and he is such a big colt that it is possible he may not go on in the right way. In Democrat there seems little room for improvement, and it is not improbable that we have seen the best of him. Diamond Jubilee's temper must always make him an exceedingly uncertain quantity, so that the race is not perhaps the good thing for one of the three that it looks at present. The fillies of this year are obviously behind the colts, but they seem a nice level lot, with some useful animals among them. Whether a two-year-old filly will retain her form is one of the most doubtful things in racing, and I am certainly not going to speculate on what is likely to win the One Thousand Guineas or the Oaks. There will be ample time for such consideration some months hence.

A feature of the year has undoubtedly been the remarkable success of the American jockeys, Sloan, J. H. Martin, Lester Rieff, and his little brother John. Their methods are beyond doubt ungainly in the extreme, but their averages show that these methods are in many cases exceedingly effective. At the same time they undoubtedly have their disadvantages. In a close



A FINISH : ENGLAND *versus* AMERICA

finish it seems to me that the best of our jockeys nearly always outride their rivals. I have not time to look back and ascertain how often S. Loates and Sloan have fought out a race this last year with the result that S. Loates has won, but I distinctly remember three or four occasions, and it is certain that American jockeys have thrown away races they ought to have won, and practically had won ; Sloan on Sibola, and Martin on Downham for example. It is also undoubted that these American riders have very little power over a self-willed horse, if he deliberately sets himself to be disagreeable. One of the disasters of the season was when, with Sloan up, even money was taken about Desmond for a Welter Handicap at the Second Spring Meeting, in a field of twenty-one ; and Desmond at the fall of the flag started off on a little journey of his own in the opposite direction. The idea that American jockeys win races because they always jump off and let their horses stride along the whole way is only entertained by people who talk about the turf without going near race-courses. Some horses win when ridden in that fashion, others do not. As a rule, however, the horses do seem to go kindly with the American jockeys sitting up on their withers. Desmond, Toussaint, and a few others are exceptions. But if the animal is good enough, the owner who can secure the services of Mornington Cannon, Watts, S. or T. Loates, may consider himself extremely fortunate.

A good deal of adverse criticism has been directed to the handicapping, and I must say that much of it has been thoroughly deserved. Owners who run their horses out seem almost as a rule to have been harshly treated, whilst men who start their horses merely to 'qualify' too frequently gain their object. 'Qualifying' used to be called 'roping,' in a less polite era than the present. Some of the handicapping during the year has been simply preposterous.

We are to see the starting gate, in spite of the strenuous opposition of the great majority of those who are most closely interested in racing, and in spite also of the fact that, as I understand, it has been discarded in America after having been in use for many years—surely a significant circumstance? By this time we pretty well know what to expect. There will seldom be much delay at the post in those races where the starting gate is employed, but there is not the least reason to hope that starts will be good ; and that accidents will occur seems to me almost inevitable. In this last respect I only hope that I am wrong.

NOTES ON A LATTER-DAY HUNTING TRIP IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

BY F. C. SELOUS

As a boy I used to devour ravenously the works of Ballantyne, Mayne Reid, Catlin, and other writers of fact and fiction concerning the wonders of the great continent of North America, and from that time onward had always nourished a strong desire to visit that country.

But it was not civilised America that I wished to see, nor the works of civilised man in that part of the world, since to me all cities built by peoples of the Caucasian race seem very much alike, although they may differ one from another somewhat in details. They are all of the same genus, so to speak, and to my mind hold nothing so grand or beautiful within their dingy walls as the ever-varying aspects of nature in the wilds. Hotels perched high up amongst the Swiss Alps, railways through the Rocky Mountains, or steamboats on the Zambesi, are all very good and useful things, no doubt, but they destroy the poetry of their surroundings.

The America I desired to visit was the America of my boyish dreams, the land of vast rolling plains, over which the shaggy bisons—now, alas! extinct—once ranged in such countless multitudes, and of rugged mountain ranges where the wapiti, once so plentiful, still roams warily, never now showing his magnificently antlered head beyond the shadow of the dark pine forests, if he can possibly avoid doing so. In a word, I wished to see wild America if there was any left, not the new Europe of the Eastern States.

In 1893 I came very near the realisation of my dream, for I had actually booked my passage to New York, and was passing through London on my way to join the steamer, when,

judging from a cablegram in one of the daily papers that trouble was surely brewing between the Matabele natives and the settlers in Mashonaland, I hurriedly changed my plans and embarked for the Cape instead.

From that time till 1897 circumstances kept me in the Old World; but in that year I was able, in company with my wife, to join a friend who owns a cattle ranche in Wyoming in an expedition to the Rocky Mountains. September 1 having been appointed as the day on which we were to start from the ranche on our hunting trip, my wife and I were able to accept an invitation which had been extended to us to be present at the meeting of the British Association, which was held in Toronto during August of the same year. We crossed from Liverpool to Montreal early in that month in the good ship *Parisian* of the Allan Line. As we were anxious to get to the Rocky Mountains as early as possible in September, our stay in Canada was necessarily brief, but during our short visit we nevertheless made many friends and saw enough of the country and its most kind and hospitable inhabitants to make us determine to revisit it whenever circumstances should permit us to do so.

Leaving Toronto on August 25, and travelling *viâ* Chicago —the infant Hercules of the great cities of the world—we reached Sheridan, Wyoming, on August 29, and were driven out the same afternoon to our friend's ranche near the little town of Bighorn. During the drive we saw numbers of the so-called 'Prairie dogs' (*Cynomys Ludovicianus*) and quite a dozen of the quaint and solemn little burrowing owls (*Speotitis cunicularis*) which live and nest in their burrows. These latter were always sitting just at the mouth of one of the Prairie dogs' holes. Just before reaching Bighorn we passed a beaver dam. At the time of our visit there were still several colonies of beavers in this neighbourhood, but these animals would probably have long since ceased to exist in this part of America had they not been protected by the Government of the State of Wyoming. This protection may possibly not be extended to the beavers very much longer, as they cause a good deal of trouble and expense to the farmers through whose land the stream on which they live happens to run, by damming it in such a way as to interfere very materially with the necessary work of irrigation.

On the day following our arrival at our friend's ranche we packed all the various things necessary for our trip on to a light

waggon, which we were to take with us as far as the foot of the main range of the Rocky Mountains, whence we intended to proceed to our camping-ground with pack ponies. In the afternoon I rode about two miles up the creek to examine a very perfect specimen of a beaver dam. This dam I was told was a very typical one. It was built across a little valley some thirty yards in width, in the form of a crescent. The stream, which had originally been confined to a narrow channel not more than a few yards in width, had, together with the overflow of the water, been completely dammed and a little lake formed which extended right across the valley. In this little lake stood many dead and leafless cottonwood or quaking aspen-trees, which, having originally grown on dry ground, had been killed by long immersion in the water. The water of the lake was flush with the top of the dam, over which it ran in the centre and gradually found its way back to the original bed of the stream. I was told that there were probably about twenty beavers in this colony, and the amount of work they had accomplished in building the dam I have described was really astonishing. They had been very busy the night before my visit, and had cut down a number of saplings of a soft-wooded tree something like poplar. The largest sapling I saw which had been felled was about four inches in diameter. No doubt beavers could cut down much larger trees if they wished to do so, as they seem to be able to fell small saplings with three or four cuts of their sharp and

BEAVER DAM ON DUCH CREEK, NEAR BIGHORN, WYOMING, AUG. 1897

powerful chisel-shaped teeth.[1] The beavers here build no lodges on their dams, but live in holes in the banks of the stream they have dammed. They are now entirely nocturnal in their habits, neither feeding nor working between sunrise and sunset.

On September 1 we made a start for the mountains, getting under way at 8 A.M. Our party consisted of my wife and myself, our friend W. M., Bob Graham our guide, Milligan the cook, and Webster who drove the waggon, as also later on helped to pack the ponies and assist in all camp work. A few days later we picked up another young fellow rejoicing in the name of Jinks, whom Graham had previously engaged in order that W. M. and myself might always have some one to accompany us when hunting. Our goods and chattels were all packed on the waggon, which was drawn by four strong horses. Every one but Webster rode, and our eleven pack ponies were driven loose behind the waggon. We followed a very good road that had been made two years previously across the Bighorn range to the broad valley or basin—as it is called out West—lying beyond, and which extends to the foot of the main chain of the Rocky Mountains. By midday we had reached the summit of the first ridge of the Bighorn range, 7200 feet above sea level. From this point we obtained a fine view of Cloud Peak, the loftiest mountain in the Bighorn range, which is upwards of 16,000 feet high.

Twenty years ago the country through which we were now journeying simply teemed with game, wapiti, mule deer, and wild sheep being very abundant in the mountains themselves, whilst white-tailed deer were plentiful in the cottonwood bottoms at the foot of the hills, and bison and antelope ranged in great numbers over the plains beyond. One of the first settlers in this part of the country, whose ranche in the early seventies was situated not far from the present town of Bighorn, told me that on the rare occasions when strangers visited him he used to ask them what meat they would like for dinner, giving them the choice of wapiti, mule deer, white-tailed deer, wild sheep, antelope, or bison, and said that if they chose anything but the last named, he was nearly always able to go out and get it within six hours. The bison, although they were sometimes to be seen in thousands close to his cabin, were not always to be

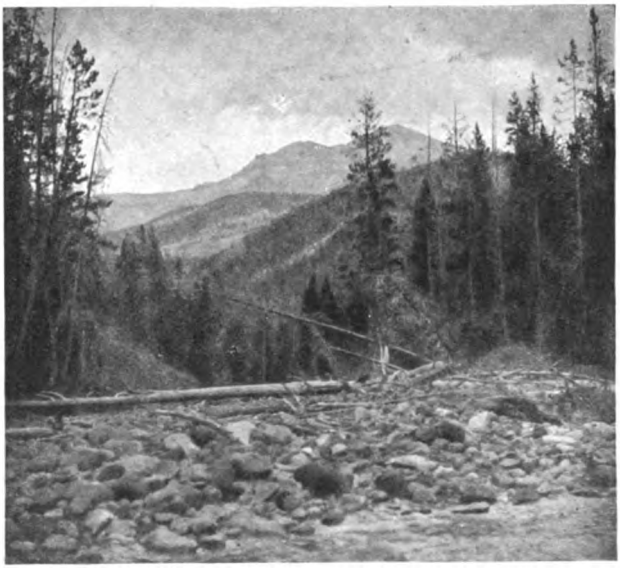
[1] At Leonardslee in Sussex, the seat of Sir Edmund Loder, Bart., the acclimatised beavers have cut down several very large trees, amongst them an oak-tree 18 inches in diameter.

depended on, as they changed their range according to the season of the year, wandering all over the vast plains of the West in search of the best grass. Bears, too, at that time were so plentiful, my informant told me, that he could not keep them out of his kitchen garden, which they were in the habit of visiting almost nightly. But what a change has come over the country in twenty years! There are still a few wapiti, mule deer, and wild sheep left in the Bighorn range, but very very few, Graham told me, even compared to what there used to be so lately as five years ago, the sheep being now almost entirely confined to the neighbourhood of Cloud Peak. Of the white-tailed deer, once so numerous in all the valleys below the hills, there are now none left anywhere near the town of Bighorn. The bison, too, have long since disappeared from the neighbouring plains, whilst the antelopes have become very scarce and terribly wild. Of bears there are still a few, but these have now become so timid and so cunning that they are but seldom encountered. Curiously enough, my friend W. M. shot a most magnificent wapiti bull in the hills close above his ranche in August 1896. This splendid animal carried one of the most beautiful heads that has ever yet fallen to the rifle of a hunter. It may be a few inches shorter than the longest head known, but for symmetry and shapeliness, and every point that goes to make a deer head a beautiful thing to look at, I have never seen its equal. This beautiful head has been photographed, but no photograph can do it anything like justice; it must be seen to be thoroughly appreciated. Of course, it was an extraordinary piece of luck getting this wapiti, as none of his kind had been seen for years previously anywhere near the place where he was shot, where, indeed, hunting had practically ceased for lack of game. This old fellow must have returned to his former haunts after the previous rutting season, and having wintered comfortably, had probably never wandered far from the spot where he was finally shot, for the grass was there very strong and rich, which had enabled him to get into splendid condition and grow a singularly large and beautiful pair of horns by the time my friend at last spied him with his glass from a point of rock quite close to the road.

In the afternoon we continued our journey through mountains for the most part covered with pine forests, much of which had been terribly devastated by fires. In some places acres upon acres of tall grey-stemmed dead pine-trees were still standing, whilst in others hundreds of these dead stems

had been blown down by the wind, and lay one across another in hopeless confusion. Here and there young trees were growing up amongst the dead and decaying stems, but as a rule there appeared to be no new growth in the devastated areas. As we proceeded we gradually ascended, and camped in a beautiful little open glade, close to a stream of clear cold water, 7800 feet above sea level. The night was bright and clear, and much warmer than I should have expected at such an altitude, there being no sign of frost in the morning.

On the following day we were up at 5.30, breakfasted at 6, and then packed the waggon and got off at 7.45. Before we broke camp several camp robbers (*Perisoreus Canadensis*)—birds of a species allied, I think, to the European jay—came hopping round us, picking up the scraps of food that had fallen to the ground during breakfast. These pretty birds are most friendly and confiding in their behaviour, and as soon as they find that their confidence has not been misplaced, they become extraordinarily tame, and I should think might soon be coaxed into taking food from one's hand. Wherever we camped in the mountains we always had at least one pair of these cheery little robbers living with us, and freely forgave them their petty larcenies for the sake of their pretty sprightly ways and pleasant companionship.



VIEW IN THE BIGHORN MOUNTAINS, WYOMING, SEPT. 1897

The road this morning led us through rocky, forest-clad hills whose summits were bare, as they rose above timber line (here probably between 10,000 and 11,000 feet above sea

level). Our route lay up and down hill, but we gradually rose to a height of 9300 feet. Here we struck the upper creeks of the Tongue River, and outspanned for our midday meal and rest. The country about here seemed admirably suited to the requirements of all the various species of big game which not many years ago used to abound in these mountains, but we never saw a track of any kind, old or new, and Graham did not seem to think that there was a single deer left anywhere near the road. We saw, however, numbers of the beautiful little striped squirrels called chipmunks (*Tamias striatus*). These little creatures were very tame and often allowed us to approach to within a few yards of them. Larger reddish-grey squirrels (*Sciurus Hudsonius*), very similar to our English animal, were also common and sometimes extraordinarily tame. Of birds I saw but few in these mountains, but I noticed a pair of American water-ouzels (*Cinclus Mexicanus*) on one of the mountain streams we crossed, which except in colour appeared just like our English bird, as they flitted from stone to stone or stood bobbing up and down on the rocks. These American birds were of a uniform slatey-blue colour. In the pine forests the camp robbers were common, as well as a species of tit (*Parus gambelli?*), and a handsome black-and-white woodpecker with (in the male) a bright red head; but altogether bird life was very badly represented. Birds of prey seemed entirely absent, and I did not notice either a hawk or an eagle of any kind whilst crossing the Bighorn range. During the afternoon we crossed the main divide of the Bighorn Mountains at an altitude of 9600 feet, rocky ridges rising about 1000 feet, on either side of us, bare of timber, and very rugged in aspect. From the divide we descended rapidly for 1600 feet and camped on Shell Creek at a height of 8000 feet above sea level. This evening we bivouacked in a little open glade surrounded by mountains and pine forests; and although there appeared to be absolutely no game about, yet the air was so invigorating and the surrounding country so wild and beautiful that it was impossible not to feel a happy contentment of mind; a contentment which did not, however, last long, for we had scarcely unhitched our team when a travelling party going eastwards appeared and pitched their camp not far from ours. I had just finished putting up the tent which my wife and I occupied, when a member of this party, who had first got his bearings from one of our men, walked up and said, 'I believe you are Mr. Selous? You've travelled some in Africa, I'm told.

I'm Mr. ——, of the "Chicago ——": here's my card. You must have met with some interesting experiences during your travels; perhaps you wouldn't mind,' &c. Now, well as I know all the great and endearing qualities of the modern newspaper reporter—the talented artist who can always make so much out of so little—I confess to having felt annoyed at meeting a member of the craft in the wilds of the Bighorn Mountains. His presence there seemed altogether incongruous and out of harmony with the surroundings. However, Mr. ——, of the 'Chicago ——' proved to be a very good sort, in spite of his professional zeal, and we spent a pleasant evening together, during which I think he gave us more information concerning his own country than he received about Africa, for he had just returned from a three months' trip to the Rocky Mountains, during which he had visited the Yellowstone Park in order to write an account of its wonders for his paper.

SCENE IN THE BIGHORN MOUNTAINS, SEPT. 1897

On the following day we continued our journey westwards, crossing another high ridge 9200 feet above sea level. The country through which we passed during the day was for the most part open and grassy, but as we were still high above the plains of the Bighorn Basin I was rather surprised when Graham pointed out to me a bleached bison skull. We soon, however, came across several more, one of them with the one horn still on the core, and we also saw an old trail and several wallows once used by these animals. I may here say that all over the Bighorn Basin and along the foothills of the Rocky Mountains I subsequently found numbers of bison skulls in a perfect state

of preservation, many of them with the horns still on the cores, and several with portions of the skin of the head and neck (with the hair still on it) adhering to the bone. Now, I believe that the last bisons seen alive in this part of America were killed in 1884, therefore none of the skulls which I saw could have been lying on the ground, exposed to the disintegrating influences of summer sun and winter frost, for less than fourteen years. I should certainly never have believed that even the hardest of bone, let alone horn and skin, could have withstood the ravages of time and exposure so well. In the climate of Africa no organic matter lasts very long when exposed to the weather, and even the skull and leg bones of an elephant would, I think, crumble to dust and absolutely disappear in less than fifteen years from the date of the animal's death.

As we advanced towards the Bighorn Basin the pine forests completely disappeared and the country gradually became more and more sterile. The cast horns of wapiti and mule deer—the former very much preponderating in numbers—now, too, lay scattered everywhere over the face of the country. These horns were all bleached white, though most of them were quite perfect and showed no signs of having been gnawed by hinds or rats. They had all been shed years ago during the annual migrations, when the great bands of wapiti were returning in the spring from their winter feeding-grounds in the Bighorn Basin to the mountain forests where they lived until once more driven to the lower and more open ground by heavy snowstorms. Now no more wapiti winter in the Bighorn Basin. Their place has been taken by the settlers' stock, and the wild creatures which the sheep and cattle have supplanted—the very few that still exist in this once magnificent hunting-ground—have to pass the whole year as best they can amongst the mountains.

In the afternoon our route lay along the course of Trapper's Creek, a mountain torrent which has cut for itself a deep gorge or canyon of very remarkable appearance and over 1000 feet in depth. Wild sheep, I was told, were not long ago plentiful amongst the precipitous rock walls, interspersed with steep grass slopes, of this wild gorge, but I doubt if any are left there now. Just before dusk we reached Trapper's Creek below the mouth of the canyon, and on the following day, September 4, we followed the course of this stream to its junction with Shell Creek, and then travelled along the course of the latter to the point where it enters the Bighorn River. The latter is a fine stream, from 100 to 200 yards in width where we forded it.

We here saw a flock of wild geese standing on a sandbank, but they were very wild, and we could not get within rifle-shot of them, nor do I know to what species they belonged. In the afternoon our route lay for a short distance along the Bighorn River, and then westwards up the course of one of its tributaries called Grey Bull Creek, which has its source in the Rocky Mountains. In the evening we camped on the bank of this creek at a spot where the water had ceased to run. There were, however, numerous pools in the bed of the creek, but the water was not very palatable, being strongly impregnated with alkaline salts.

During the two following days we travelled steadily westwards across the Bighorn Basin. The heat was very great, the dust very annoying, and the water very bad. The whole of the Bighorn Basin is a most uninviting country to look at, being arid and barren to an indescribable degree. During summer the heat is very trying, and in the winter the treeless plains are swept by icy winds. Except along the river bottoms there is scarcely any vegetation whatever save the ever-present sage-bushes. In general appearance this district of America very much resembles the driest and most arid portions of the Karoo in the western province of the Cape Colony, whilst some of the bare ridges or low ranges of hills by which it is intersected look like gigantic heaps of tailings from diamond or gold mines. The faces of these mud ridges have been worn by rain and snow, and sun and storm, into innumerable grooves and furrows, and in some places the soil is very beautifully coloured with various shades of red, pink, and mauve, the colours being possibly due to the alkaline salts with which the whole district is more or less impregnated. But although the basin of the Bighorn is in general aspect an arid and uninviting-looking desert, it is—thanks to the fact that it is surrounded by high ranges of mountains—intersected by several fine streams of water, by the aid of which considerable areas of ground have been put under irrigation by the hard-working and intelligent settlers who have taken up land in this district. The land bordering the streams is usually very level, and there is thus not much difficulty in leading the water on to it. Only hard work and ordinary intelligence are required. I saw excellent crops of wheat and oats standing where the whole country but a few years ago was an arid wilderness covered with sage brush. All kinds of vegetables, I was told, grow well in the light soil, and fruit-trees

are being planted. The settlers in this part of America have, I think, shown splendid energy and enterprise in converting this uninviting-looking country into well cultivated land. Of course, they could have done nothing without the water, but in many cases the water has been led out from the river for miles to their homesteads, at the cost of an enormous amount of labour. Many of these hard-working people, I was told, were Mormons from Utah, who are said to understand cultivating land by means of irrigation better than any other people in the United States. If Mr. Rhodes could only manage to transplant a few hundred of these hard-working Mormon families to the high plateaux of Matabeleland and Mashonaland, what a transformation they would work in those countries in a few short years! provided always they did not succumb to the influences of their new environment, and gradually come to consider manual labour derogatory to a white man in a country where there exist numerous aboriginal dark-skinned races, who can be hired to work and sweat in the hot sun, whilst the European contents himself with the part of overseer. There are, of course, some countries where white men cannot work all day in the sun; but on the plateaux of the interior of South Africa they most certainly can, and would, were it not for the presence of the less civilised black races.

On the afternoon of September 6 we got into a country where a few prong-horned antelopes still roamed, but although we left the road and made a long détour in search of them, we did not come across any of the animals themselves, though we saw a few fairly fresh tracks. On this day, too, we saw and killed our first rattlesnake. We also sighted a prairie wolf (*Canis lupus Occidentalis*) in the distance, and came on a badger (*Taxidea Americana*), which retreated in so leisurely a manner that after dismounting from my horse I ran up to it without difficulty. I could have killed it with a club, had I had one, but did not care to shoot it, as I knew that an expanding bullet would damage its skin very much, so I allowed it to retire into a large burrow. It went to ground backwards, always facing its enemy, in the same manner invariably practised by the South African wart hog, which, no matter how hard pressed it may be, never bolts head-first down a hole, but always turns round and goes down backwards.

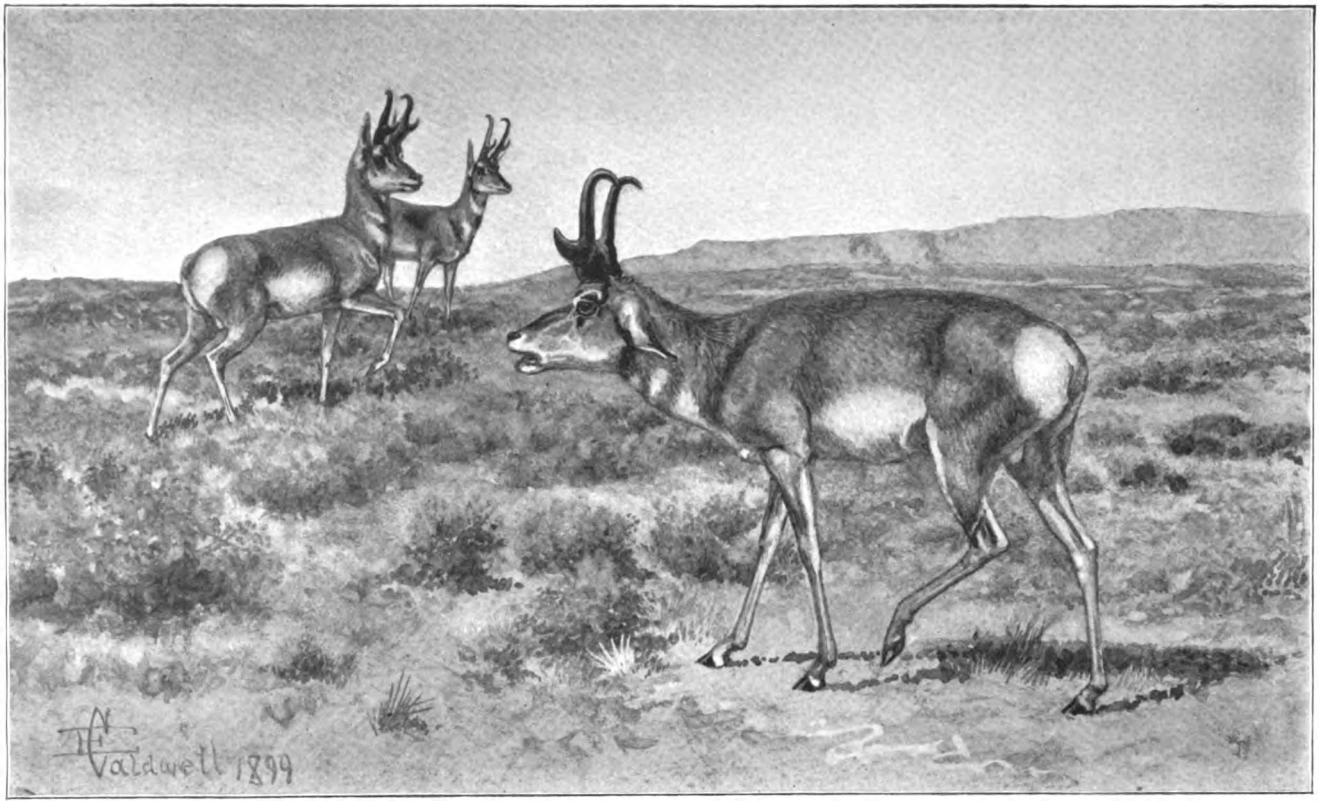
On the following morning we killed a rattlesnake close to our waggon, after having first photographed it. It seemed a very lethargic kind of reptile, possibly because the early morning

air was somewhat chilly, and would not move or give the warning rattle—although I had got my camera on the ground at a distance of only four feet away from it—until Graham stirred it up with a stick. Then it raised its head a foot or so from the ground, and made a somewhat feeble noise with its rattle. Whilst photographing the rattlesnake I saw three sage grouse walking through the brush a short distance away. One of them was a splendid old cock, apparently about the size of a capercailzie hen, but with longish pointed tail-feathers. Thinking

PRONGHORN BUCK SHOT IN THE BIGHORN BASIN, SEPT. 1897

that it would be a good thing to shoot a couple of these birds for the pot—for we had seen nothing in the shape of game since leaving M.'s ranche, with the exception of the unapproachable geese and a couple of hares—I was walking to the waggon to get a shot gun, when three prong-horned antelopes appeared on the top of a piece of rising ground about 500 yards distant. They had probably been intending to have a drink in the very nasty alkali-impregnated water-hole by the side of which we were camped. They now stood gazing at us from their safe position on the top of the high ground for several minutes, and we were able to examine them carefully through our glasses. They all three carried horns, and were therefore males, the female prong-horned antelope being hornless. After having

satisfied their curiosity, which was not sufficient to bring them any nearer to us, they turned round and disappeared behind the ridge. M., having already shot prong-horned antelopes, asked me to go after them, which I at once proceeded to do. I had observed that as they disappeared they were heading to the left, so I made a longish détour and presently sighted them amongst some very short sage brush about 400 yards from me. From here I crawled within 200 yards of them. This was a very disagreeable process, as all over these alkali plains there grows in great profusion a kind of dwarf cactus, whose thick fleshy arms, which only appear just above the surface of the ground, are thickly covered with innumerable little sharp spines, which, on being touched, at once become detached from the parent plant, and adhere to one's flesh in little clusters. The sides of these little spines are minutely serrated, which causes them to work their way deeper and deeper into whatever they have adhered to. They are said often to cause festering sores, but I suppose that is when one's blood is out of order. After my stalk was over I found my knees and thighs, elbows and hands, full of these cactus spines; but at the time I was approaching the antelopes I was so intent on the business in hand that I did not pay any attention to them. When I was about 200 yards away from them, I think one of the antelopes saw me, but could not quite make me out as I was lying flat on the ground. He trotted away for a few yards, and then stood nearly broadside with his head turned looking backwards. Not seeing any chance of getting nearer, and as I could see him better than either of the other two, I fired at him as I lay, and heard the bullet tell. He dashed away, however, together with his companions; but I did not think he would go far, as I was using a Mannlicher rifle and expanding bullets. Running quickly to the spot where the antelope had stood when I fired at him, I at once saw blood on his tracks, and on creeping to the top of the rising ground behind which he had disappeared, saw him standing about 300 yards away. One of the unwounded antelopes was close to him, the other being some distance ahead. Both of these were holding their heads high, and were gazing steadily towards were I lay, whilst their stricken comrade was walking slowly forwards with drooping head. I could see he was badly wounded, and so determined to finish him before turning my attention to his friends. These, however, bounded away through the sage scrub immediately they heard my shot, which dropped the wounded antelope in his tracks. On walking up to him I



BADLY WOUNDED

found that my bullet must just have skimmed along his back, and catching him in the back of the head had come out on his forehead. Having heard my shots, Graham now came galloping up, and finding that my stalk had been successful, at once rode back to the waggon to fetch my camera and bring a pack horse to carry in the meat, whilst I sat down—on a carefully selected spot—and commenced to extract as many cactus spines from my knees and elbows as possible. I found, however, that numbers of these little prickles had broken off and were very difficult to get hold of, and the greater part of these I had to

PRONGHORN BUCK BROUGHT TO CAMP, SEPT. 1897

put up with; but though I could feel them for a long time afterwards if I pressed on the spots where they had disappeared, they never caused any inflammation. Whilst taking the antelope to the waggon I very nearly stepped on a rattlesnake, which lay perfectly still, coiled up under a little sage tuft, and never moved until struck with a piece of wood. These rattlesnakes appeared to me to be as lethargic as are South African puff adders on a cold morning, and I was glad that this one had not been lying exactly in my path as I was crawling up to the antelopes, or I might very easily have put my hand on it before noticing it. The dead prong-horned buck—a fair-sized male, Graham said, and in good condition—weighed 109½ lbs. as he lay, and 83 lbs.

clean—within 1 lb. of 6 stones. The scientific name which has been given to the prong-horned antelope—*Antilocapra Americana*, American goat antelope—appears to me, now that I have seen these animals in their native haunts, to be a singularly inappropriate one; for in habits and appearance, the form of its finely-cut legs, and longish, sharp-pointed hoofs, the nature of the country it frequents, and, indeed, in every other particular, with one curious exception, the animal is a true antelope, and is as far removed from any species of wild goat as it is from a sheep. The one point in which it differs from the antelopes of the Old World, the annual shedding of the horn-sheaths, is certainly a most remarkable distinction, but does not bring it any nearer to the goats. As the process by which the horn-sheaths of the prong-horned antelope are annually shed and renewed is, I think, not generally understood, and the fact itself often doubted, I make no apology for here quoting from the very interesting account written on this subject by the well-known American naturalist, Judge Caton. After speaking of certain observations which he had made on the horn growth of a young pronghorn buck running in his park, the author of 'The Deer and Antelope of North America' goes on to say:

'Let us observe the horn of the adult male antelope, which is shed in October. If we make our observation so soon as the horn is cast off, we can readily understand the process by which it is removed. By looking into the cavity of the cast-off horn, we shall see that it extends but about halfway its length, or a little way above the prong; and we shall also see that it contains a large number of coarse lightish-coloured hairs, all of which are firmly attached to the horn, and many of them, towards the lower part, passing quite through it. We see the core of the horn is covered with a thick vascular skin, which is pretty well covered with the same kind of hairs as those seen in the cavity of the horn. We now appreciate that these hairs grew from the skin and more or less penetrated the shell or horn, and when this was removed, some were torn from the skin and others from the horn. We observe further that the new horn had begun its growth a considerable time before the old one was cast, for the new horn was extended several inches above the top of the core, nearly in a vertical direction, though with a slightly posterior inclination. The top of this for nearly half an inch is already hardened into perfect horn. Below this it is softer, and a little way down it has lost the horny texture,

but is a pretty firm and somewhat flexible mass down to the core and around it; at the upper part of which, however, it has rather the appearance of thick, massive skin, of a high temperature, showing great activity in the blood vessels permeating it. As we pass lower down, the skin is thinner, and shows less excitement or activity. Upon this skin, enveloping the core, we find the hairs already described.'

(*To be continued.*)

SPEED-SKATING

BY CHARLES EDGINGTON AND GEORGE WOOD

OUR age is one of quick living and of record-breaking; everything is for pace, from the 'quick lunch' of our American cousins to the Titanic races across continents and oceans of express trains and 'ocean-greyhounds.' Time, or rather the saving of it, is the all-important factor of modern life, and from this desire in every-day business we have arrived at the endeavour to economise it even in our amusements—we must break records, or at least try to, in every branch of sport and of athletics. From the scorcher on the high road to the motor-paced expert on the bicycle track is but a step; the school champion runner is father to the professional hundred-pound-a-side match maker; the Fen skater who covered long distances in short times for pure enjoyment has developed into the speed-skater, amateur or professional. No expert fast-riding bicyclist is quite content until he has made an attempt to lower some previous record, local or otherwise, whether by whole seconds or only by fifths; the cricketer is no longer satisfied with an average of a mere twenty—he must run into the forties or fifties at least, and must score centuries in record quick times—or perhaps tens in record slow ones. *Toujours l'audace*—Pace, always Pace—is our motto. And with this need of the present generation has sprung up a general mechanical improvement. Everything that can be improved by mechanical device has been, down to the very paraphernalia of our games—'improvement' reading for additional speed and lightness combined with sufficient strength; improved 'short drinks,' even, on the same principle! We have lighter

guns, lighter rods, lighter 'bikes,' lighter 'light boats,' and lighter skates.

Writing on speed-skating Mr. Heathcote says: 'In all our games and in many of our sports, the marked superiority of modern implements enables men to achieve feats undreamed of in former times, while the *éclat* attached to record-breaking promotes efforts on the part of aspirants to fame far in excess of the aims of our forefathers'; but he questions the possibility of improving on the old skating records, ice being the same nowadays that it was then, and the improvement in the skates being insufficient, he thinks, to revolutionise the art. The question has been answered since he wrote this, and a marked advance there is, whether it be due to skaters, skates, or superior style. Speed-skating in England—that is to say, serious speed-skating — undoubtedly originated in the Fen country. What young skater has not, almost as soon as he could stand securely, raced a friend, with hat crammed down on the back of the head, and legs, and arms, and the inevitable stick flying wildly in every direction—a 'caucus race,' beginning nowhere in particular and ending anywhere to the satisfaction of at least one of the rivals—to the general disgust of all the other skaters? For ordinarily the figure-skater, with his slow gyrations and ordered progress, fears and hates the speed-skater. It is with equal distrust and dislike that the real Fen skater looks on a figure-skater: there man, woman, boy, girl, the very babe almost, skate but for speed only. One of the writers of this has himself nearly died the death by stoning—or was it snowballing?—for being guilty of performing threes and other foolish figures on

PEDER OESTLUND (TRONDJHEM), CHAMPION OF THE WORLD, 1897–99

Guyhirne Wash in the Fen country, and he only preserved his bodily safety and any shred of reputation by proving himself the equal if not the better of his persecutors in pace, even though skating on the much-despised figure-skates.

The Fen country embraces parts of Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, and Lincolnshire, and may be considered as all the country forming the watershed of the lower reaches of the rivers running into the Wash. The land is for the most part below the level of the sea, and the rivers are kept in their courses by artificial banks. In a good skating winter, when there has been a sufficiency of rain before the frost, the

H. GATTER (VIENNA) FINISHING DOWN THE STRAIGHT IN INTERNATIONAL RACES AT DAVOS, JAN. 1895

land between two such semi-artificial rivers will be flooded, despite the transverse dykes, to a depth of a foot or so, presenting when frozen a sheet of ice twenty miles long maybe and half a mile broad. On such an expanse the figure-skater with his orange feels quite lost; every one considers himself bound to skate to cover much ground where there are such distances available. According to Mr. Fowler skating was actually introduced in the Fen country by the Royalist exiles returning from Holland after the Restoration. In 1648, in his 'English and Netherduytch Dictionarie,' Hexham speaks of 'skates which they slide upon the ice in Holland,' but he makes no mention of their being used in England, and it is not until 1662 that Pepys, keen novelty hunter, writes that he went 'over the

Parke (where I first in my life, it being a great frost, did see people sliding with their skeates, which is a very pretty art).'

However it originated in the Fens, the art of speed-skating has flourished mightily there, and the Fen country has been for long time the home of English speed-skaters. There every village had its champion ; and great matches were 'run' between the local representatives, every man striving his utmost for the honour of his own birthplace. The names of these local champions were household words among all classes, and these small competitions excited the keenest interest and a very genuine sporting feeling. In addition to these semi-private

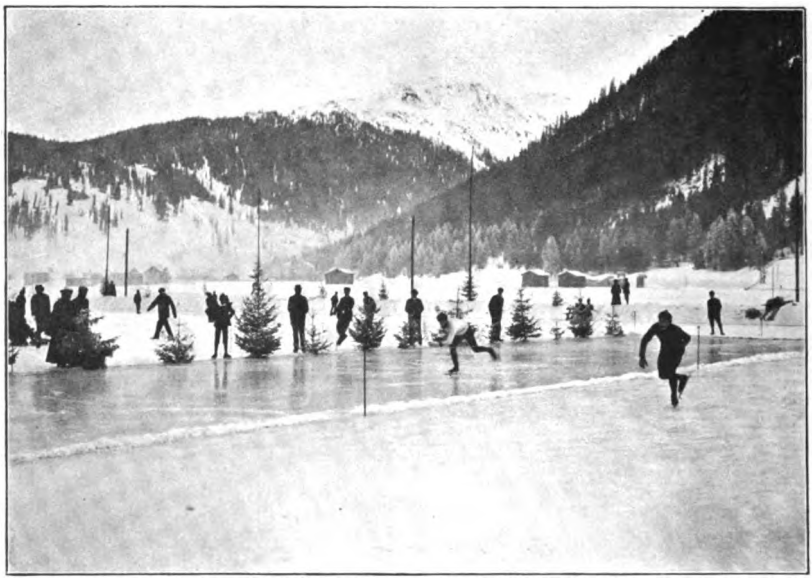
A START

H. Kleeberg (*Berlin*) v. *C. Edgington* (*Oxford*), *Davos*, 1896

matches there were well ordered and arranged competitions, open to all comers, from which has arisen without much modification the present procedure of the English, or European, or World's Championship. In connection with speed-skating the names of two Fen families will always be remembered—the Smarts and the Sees. In 1854 William, generally known as 'Turkey,' Smart appeared in public, defeating the then recognised champion. From this date he carried all before him, save for some defeats at the hands, or rather the feet, of 'Gutta-Percha' See, until 1867, when, forty-one years old, he found that youth would be served and that he could no longer outpace his younger rivals. From 1878 'Fish' Smart, nephew of old 'Turkey,' was recognised as the fastest skater in England and as one of the

fastest in the world; it was not until 1889 that his victorious career came to a close. His place was taken by James Smart, a younger brother, whose most serious rival was George See, a son of 'Gutta-Percha.' Since their time few English skaters have been found who could hold their own against their foreign rivals.

For many years the Fen skate was recognised as the only pattern for speed-skating; the stock of the skate was wood, and it was secured to the boots by an intricate arrangement of straps,

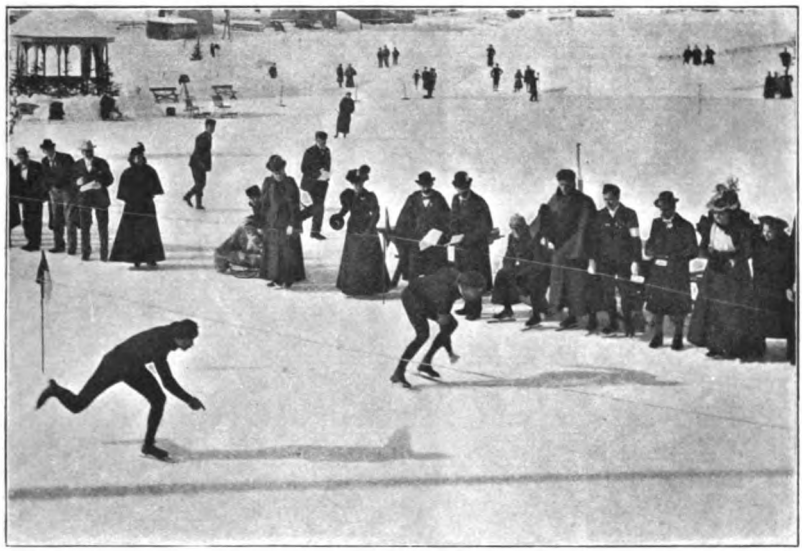


THE DAVOS RINK AND ITS MOUNTAINS

Photo-skating on the Curling Rink. C. Edgington (Oxford) v. H. Kleeberg (Berlin)

the blade being long and narrow with a square heel and upward projecting toe. This skate has been superseded in modern times by the Norwegian pattern, which is built for lightness combined with strength. The blade, which is little more than a razor edge, averaging about 17½ inches in length, is held in a hollow aluminium tube, which is fixed to two thin sole-plates by means of tubular connections: these sole-plates are fastened on to the boot itself, so that all the cumbersome strapping is done away with and the construction admits of a far lighter boot, which, through fitting tightly, gives scope for the play of the ankles and of the muscles of the feet. This skate was introduced by Axel Paulsen, a Norwegian, who in 1884 carried all before him.

Although the proper style of using it was not evolved till some years later, yet it was the introduction of this skate with its long, thin, flat blade and its prolonged heel which has led to the modern style of speed-skating, and has made possible the much improved racing times of the last few years. The superiority of this pattern, difficult as it is to use at first, both because of the long heels and toes, and owing to the fact that the blade when once it is set down on an edge with weight on it holds the ice and travels practically on a straight line, is now generally admitted. All the leading Fen men, though they held out



AN EXCITING TUSSLE

The 500 mètres race in the World's Championship at Davos, Feb. 1898. Frederiksen (Norway) v. J. Seyler (Munich). Seyler won by ½ of a second

gallantly for many years in favour of their trusty old Fen 'runners,' dear from many an association of 'dyke,' 'drain,' and 'wash,' have been obliged, from the necessity of winning races, to adopt the Norwegian pattern. Abroad, on the harder ice, there are no two opinions on the subject, and no serious competitor in the World's Championship has used any other kind of skate during the last five years, with the sole exception of J. Wink, the Finn from Helsingfors, who was third in the 5000 and 10,000 mètres at St. Petersburg in 1896.

In a short article it is impossible to give an elaborate analysis of the various motions which combine to make a perfect stroke. Briefly it may be said that the essence of the modern racing style

is its *directness*, that is, the avoidance of any waste of time due to travelling in a curve during any part of the stroke. It is in this 'directness' that the Norwegian skate is superior to all others, though the principle of its use was recognised only of comparatively late years, and by the best skaters. Even so fine a skater as Mr. J. Donoghue, the American amateur, who won the World's Championship in 1890–91, had not mastered the niceties of the Norwegian stroke, and it is for this reason chiefly that the foremost men of the present day have eclipsed the times which he accomplished.

Mr. Tebbutt, writing of Donoghue's stroke, states that it began on the *outside* edge, the body being thrown over the leg as it were, and gradually passing over first to the flat of the blade and then to the inside edge: as the foot went away outside the centre line it described a curve, less pronounced than that of the Fen stroke, but still a curve. This is substantially what happened with the old Fen skate, though there were of course slight differences owing to the length and curvature of the blade, and the body 'rode less over the striking leg.' But nowadays it is easy to see from a study of the style and of the skate marks of the best men—Oestlund, Seyler, Estlander, and others—that from the moment when the unemployed foot is brought close up past the other, the toe being kept well in, and set down on the ice in exact position for the new stroke, this stroke travels entirely on the *inside* edge, and this edge being flat on the ice with weight upon it describes what is practically a straight line: the last few inches of the stroke tail off slightly in an outward direction when the heel leaves the ice, and the final 'scotch' is given with the toe.

The only time, in fact, that the outside edge is used is in travelling round curves, so that the use of it depends on the track. It is well known that the English form of track, officially laid down by the laws of racing compiled in 1880 and employed ever since, is the straight course with sharp turns round a post or barrel. The course is generally a quarter of a mile in length, in order to get a 'mile with three turns,' or where possible longer, 660 yards or half a mile, the prescribed distance for championship races being a mile and a half with three turns. On the Continent the tracks are arranged on an entirely different principle. The courses abroad have two long straight sides and two curved ends, with a double track roped off all round except for part of one side, where a space is left open for the competitors to cross over—the skater who has the

outside track for the first curve having the inside for the next, and *vice versâ*. One of the best instances of this kind of course is that at Davos-Platz in Switzerland, where the World's Championship of 1897–8 was held; it may be taken as the typical modern racing track, which—and it is scarcely an exaggeration to say so, for is it not situated a mile nearer the sky than most others?—skaters regard lovingly as Plato's 'ideal course laid up in the heavens.' The whole course is 400 mètres in length (a quarter of a mile less two and a half yards), with curves of a radius of 25 and 30 mètres re-

J. GREVE (HOLLAND)
The Top Curve at Davos

spectively: the track has been practically permanent and unaltered since 1892, when the first of the series of annual International races was held. The International Skating Club, Davos, being under German management, colossal accuracy is displayed in all official matters, and the track is measured with great exactness, by copper wire, under the direction of an engineer, every year before the races; last year, owing to attacks on its accuracy suggested by the wonderful times accomplished, it was measured no fewer than four times. The curves are each an exact semicircle, the radii being measured from the centre to half a mètre beyond the guide posts, and this makes the 'straights' just over 110 mètres in length. It is this beautiful accuracy of curve which (apart from the absence of wind)

is mainly responsible for the number of records that have been made on the Davos course, the happy medium having been attained between a curve too small to be taken at full speed in a short race, and a curve too large to be taken with the step-over-step action. This crossing over of the leg is well illustrated in the accompanying photographs, that of the Dutchman, J. Banning, being an extreme case.

Continental races are always run from right to left, so that on the curves the right leg is crossed over and put down on an inside edge ; the left, which is entirely on the outside edge, passing well behind and across to obtain the kick off. To the spectator on the inside of the circle the movement looks exactly like running, and the terrific speed at which a good short-distance skater, such as Naess, Oestlund, or Seyler, rushes round these curves must be seen, or rather timed, before it can be believed ; each of these skaters has done the 500 mètres race (nearly 546 yards) in about 47 seconds.

The four recognised championship distances are 500, 1500, 5000, and 10,000 mètres, corresponding to 546, 1638, 5460, 10,920 yards respectively ; the third and fourth distances being just over three miles and six miles. To obtain the title 'Amateur Champion of the World,' a skater must be first in three of these and must finish in the fourth. The present records are :

WORLD'S RECORDS.

Distance.	Time.	Holder.	Place and Date.
Mètres.	Mins. Secs.		
500	46⅗	P. Oestlund (Trondjhem)	Trondjhem '97
1500	2 23⅖	,, ,,	Davos '98
5000	8 37⅗	J. Eden (Holland)	Hamar '95
10,000	17 56	,, ,,	Hamar '95

Eden's record for the 1500 mètres was 2 mins. 25⅗ secs.

The vast improvement of the present-day skaters may be seen by comparing their times with those of the leading skaters of the period when the Norwegian skate was first introduced. The short race, 500 mètres, was not regularly adopted until quite recently ; but in 1891, at Stockholm, O. Grunden and G. Fjoestad, the two leading Swedes, defeated the Norwegian Norseng over this distance, their respective times being 50⅘, 51, 51⅖ secs., which do not compare with Oestlund's 46⅗. At Amsterdam in 1890, K. Pander, the Dutch amateur, in the pink

of condition after his training at St. Moritz, won the International half-mile race (equivalent to just over 800 mètres) in 1 min. $22\frac{2}{5}$ secs.; the present world's record for the distance, made in 1897, by Nilsson the American professional, in 1 min. $17\frac{1}{5}$ secs. and Oestlund's record, 1000 mètres skated in 1 min. 38 secs., also works out to about 1 min. 17 secs. for the half-mile. In the 5000 mètres race we find Axel Paulsen skating the distance in 11 mins. 11 secs. This was in 1880; in 1886 Godager lowered the time to 10 mins. 29 secs. in the first Norwegian amateur championship, and this he improved on at

CROSSING THE LEGS

J. Banning (Holland) on Top Curve in extreme position. World's Championship at Davos, Feb. 1898

Stockholm in 1889, doing 10 mins. $5\frac{2}{5}$ secs. In 1895 Eden brought the time down to 8 mins. $37\frac{3}{5}$ secs.

In longer distances the improvement is even more marked. Thus for 5 miles we find Donoghue in 1890 taking 17 mins. $50\frac{1}{5}$ secs., and Norseng 16 mins. $48\frac{2}{5}$ secs., though the former improved his time to 16 mins. 1 sec., and even to 15 mins. $36\frac{2}{5}$ secs., which at that date was considered almost incredible. The present record is Nilsson's 14 mins. 47 secs., but Eden must have beaten this handsomely in his wonderful spin of 17 mins. 56 secs. for 10,000 mètres, and he probably did the 5 miles in about 14 mins. 25 secs. In 1891 James Smart's time for 10 miles was 36 mins. 41 secs., and this had never been beaten by an Englishman; in 1899, on the Davos track, C. Edgington,[1]

[1] One of the authors of this article.—Ed.

Oxford University, skated nearly 19¼ miles in the hour—a wonderful performance—which means 10 miles in little more than 31 minutes.

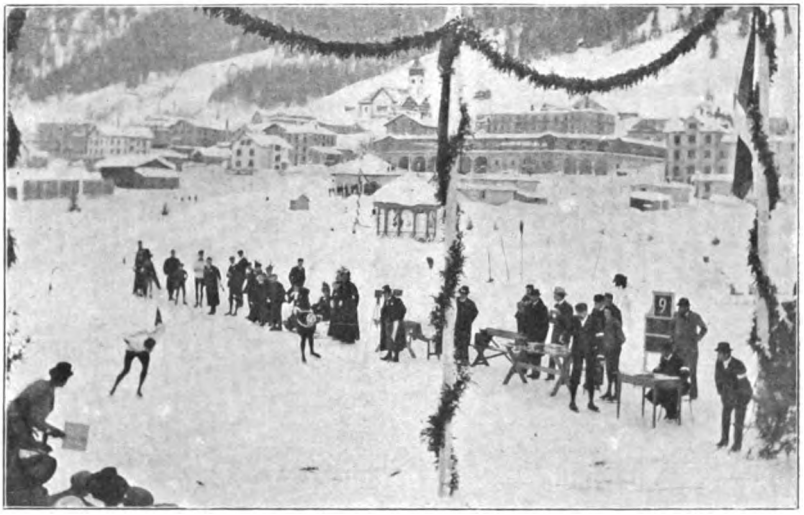
Is this improvement in times due then to the new style, new skates, &c., or to the man? The question must be decided by those who discuss and settle such problems as 'Is the human race deteriorating?' There can be no doubt, however, that the reason why amateurs have been enabled to reach the height of excellence attained by the professionals is because they have taken racing seriously and are willing to go through a course

LENGTHENING OUT

P. Oestlund on the straight at Davos, 1899

of training more or less severe. The most noticeable points in connection with the physique of the speed-skater are strong development of the lungs, thighs, and small of the back: the bent position necessarily adopted produces a very great strain on the back in a long race, and it is chiefly the extensor muscles of the thighs and those of the feet which are used in the stroke. The present World's Champion, Peder Oestlund, whose portrait decked out with trophies is reproduced, is a fine powerful man and has what is not usually regarded as an ornament, but which is certainly useful for speed-skating, a large foot: this enables him to wear conveniently a skate longer than the average and gives him the means of a very powerful stroke.

Oestlund, who is an amateur, has demonstrated his superiority to the professionals by winning successively the championships of Norway, Europe, and the World ; indeed, for the last two years he has been practically unbeaten. Too high praise cannot be given him for his splendid achievement at Davos in 1898, when he performed a feat which few men would have attempted and which was worthy of the old Vikings' blood which flows in his veins. In the 500 mètre race, the first of the four run to decide the World's Championship, he fell against an iron post, while going at a terrific pace round the first curve, and



NOT MUCH IN IT

E. Vollenweider (Russian) v. J. Greve (Dutchman), 1500 mètres European Championship, Davos, 1899

inflicted a severe wound on his leg ; nothing daunted, he turned out in bandages (against the doctor's order), and skated with the greatest pluck and determination in the remaining three races, winning them all from his formidable opponent and former conqueror, Seyler, the European champion. We read of the length of the stroke of the old-time champions, and marvel when we are told that old 'Turkey' Smart covered 22 yards at a stroke ; whether this be true or not, it is noticeable that with the Norwegian skates the length of the stroke has decreased considerably, and Eden's or Oestlund's average nearer six or seven yards than ten, which was considered a moderate distance in the old time, when skaters travelled part of the stroke

on the outside edge. At St. Petersburg in 1896 Eden's stroke in the 1500 mètres averaged about 6 yards 1 foot, in the 5000 mètres nearly 7 yards, and in the 10,000 about 7½ yards.

Apart from winning races the joy of speed-skating is very great; it is perhaps the nearest approach to flying at which we have as yet arrived; and almost indescribable is the pleasure, albeit a punishing race is to follow, of facing the starter and his '*Meine herren, sind sie fertig? Achtung! Los!*'

THE DUKE OF BEAUFORT'S HOUNDS AFTER WOLF IN FRANCE

BY ERNEST BELLECROIX

THE recent death of the Duke of Beaufort vividly recalls that famous sportsman's visit to France in the year 1863, when he brought his pack of hounds across the Channel to share the sport of wolf-hunting, and it seems peculiarly appropriate that an account of the expedition should be given in the BADMINTON MAGAZINE, a publication named after his Grace's house.

The Duke had for many years won a great reputation in France as a lover of the chase; French sportsmen had an opportunity of admiring his splendid pack of foxhounds at the Paris Dog Show, but their genuine sporting qualities were known only by hearsay. The prospect of having the Duke to hunt in France was therefore hailed with enthusiasm by French sportsmen, and long before his arrival the projected visit was the chief subject of conversation, and the leading topic of all sporting newspapers. One of the latter, allowing imagination to run riot, informed its readers that the noble Duke would arrive in Poitou with a following of 200 hounds, 150 horses, and innumerable attendants, whips, grooms, &c.

It may be advisable to interpolate here a few words explaining the origin of this idea of entering English foxhounds to the French wolf.

Monsieur Auguy, a master of wolf hunting (*officier de*

louveterie) in Poitou, knowing that the Duke weeded his kennels every year of all hounds that did not reach his standard, conceived the idea of procuring some of the descendants of a pack that had just been declared at the Islington Show to be the finest in England. He accordingly wrote to the Duke, offering to purchase a few of the rejected hounds, and received a reply to the effect that the Duke did not sell his hounds, but would be pleased to make a present of a couple of them to his fellow-sportsman. At the same time he asked for some particulars of a sport so interesting and exciting as wolf-hunting, and expressed his regret at the absence of opportunity to indulge in it in England.

To this Monsieur Auguy replied, assuring the Duke, in the name of all the sportsmen of Poitou, that if he would honour their province with a visit and bring his pack with him, he would receive a hearty welcome. With the good-fellowship of a sportsman and a gentleman the Duke accepted the invitation, and, having previously sent on a confidential servant to make the needful arrangements, shortly afterwards took up his residence in a comfortable shooting-box at Rieul l'Espoir, placed at his disposal by the owner, Monsieur Chabot.

The Duke of Beaufort was accompanied by his son, the Marquess of Worcester, the Right Hon. M. Russell, a relative of the minister, Captain Graham and Captain Wyndham, both of her Majesty's Guards. Monsieur Auguy and Count Roget de Chezelles were also his guests at Rieul l'Espoir.

Kennels and stables had been erected in the neighbourhood of the pavilion to accommodate the hounds and horses brought from England by the Duke. There were sixteen magnificent hunters and twenty couples of hounds under the care of Clarke the huntsman and the whips. Horses and hounds were alike the object of the greatest admiration; the former were grand representatives of the famous hunters so well known in England, but so seldom seen in France. The pack consisted of twenty dogs and twenty bitches; a thing quite unknown in France, where the dogs are always in a large majority. Every one agreed that it was altogether impossible to imagine a collection of animals more remarkable or better selected for shape, strength, speed, and uniformly perfect condition.

But how would these fine hounds behave when following a wolf? That was the great question which all French sportsmen and the Duke himself wished to answer. Opinions differed; some were inclined to believe that these famous foxhounds would possibly be able to kill an 'old wolf'; others, on the

contrary, maintained that the English hounds, accustomed to fox-hunting and totally unacquainted with the scent of a wolf, would obstinately refuse to follow it.

Of all game animals, an 'old wolf' is certainly the most difficult to hunt. Extremely wary, the slightest alarm makes him move off at full speed; his unequalled strength enables him, when necessary, to keep the hounds on the move for an indefinite period; trotting before them quite at his ease and without fatigue, he renders it impossible to bring up reinforcements of hounds, as one never knows for which part of the country he intends to make.

As to the huntsmen, whatever may be the condition of their mounts, they cannot hope to keep up with an animal that, like the wolf, always runs straight on, and second horses are out of the question for the reason just stated. The consequence is that, the hounds being fatigued and missing the encouragement of their huntsmen, give up the chase.

If the wolf has got the start, and the whips try to get in front of him by making a circuit, in hope of turning him, at the sound of the chase he is off at full speed, and those who strove to get ahead arrive just in time to see him going steadily at a quiet trot two or three hundred yards off; he knows very well, the artful creature, that it is needless to hurry so much now, and that he can moderate his pace and keep himself fresh for another occasion, while the hounds left behind are making up their leeway. And neither ravines, marshes, rivers, nor villages oblige him to deviate or stop him in his course; the wily animal continues in spite of all to forge ahead without worrying himself about the peasants' shouting and bawling, and entirely disdainful of their threats. Unacquainted with the country, with foundered horses and bewildered hounds, the huntsman is compelled to give up, and orders the retreat to be sounded.[1] The 'old wolf' is quite ready to begin again the next day; but experienced huntsmen are generally content with the first day's trial and let him go about his business.

Such is, in a few words, an 'old wolf' hunt.

The Duke of Beaufort, knowing how the case stood, had never entertained the hope of hunting down a full-sized old wolf with hounds that were not at all accustomed to follow

[1] *Sonner la retraite*, to sound certain notes on the horn to indicate that the hunt is over and to recall the hounds.

the scent ; his only ambition was to hunt a 'louvart' (cub, wolf under a year old). 'I simply desire to make an experiment,' he contented himself with saying. 'I do not pretend to ignore the difficulties of my undertaking, but the greater the difficulty the greater the success, if success we achieve.'

The time of year (April 1863) at which the Duke came to France was not calculated to make this difficulty less, for it is considered a good stroke of work in January to kill a cub born in the preceding March or April, and very much harder to succeed in hunting down an animal two or three months older, full of vigour and capable of fighting for its life.

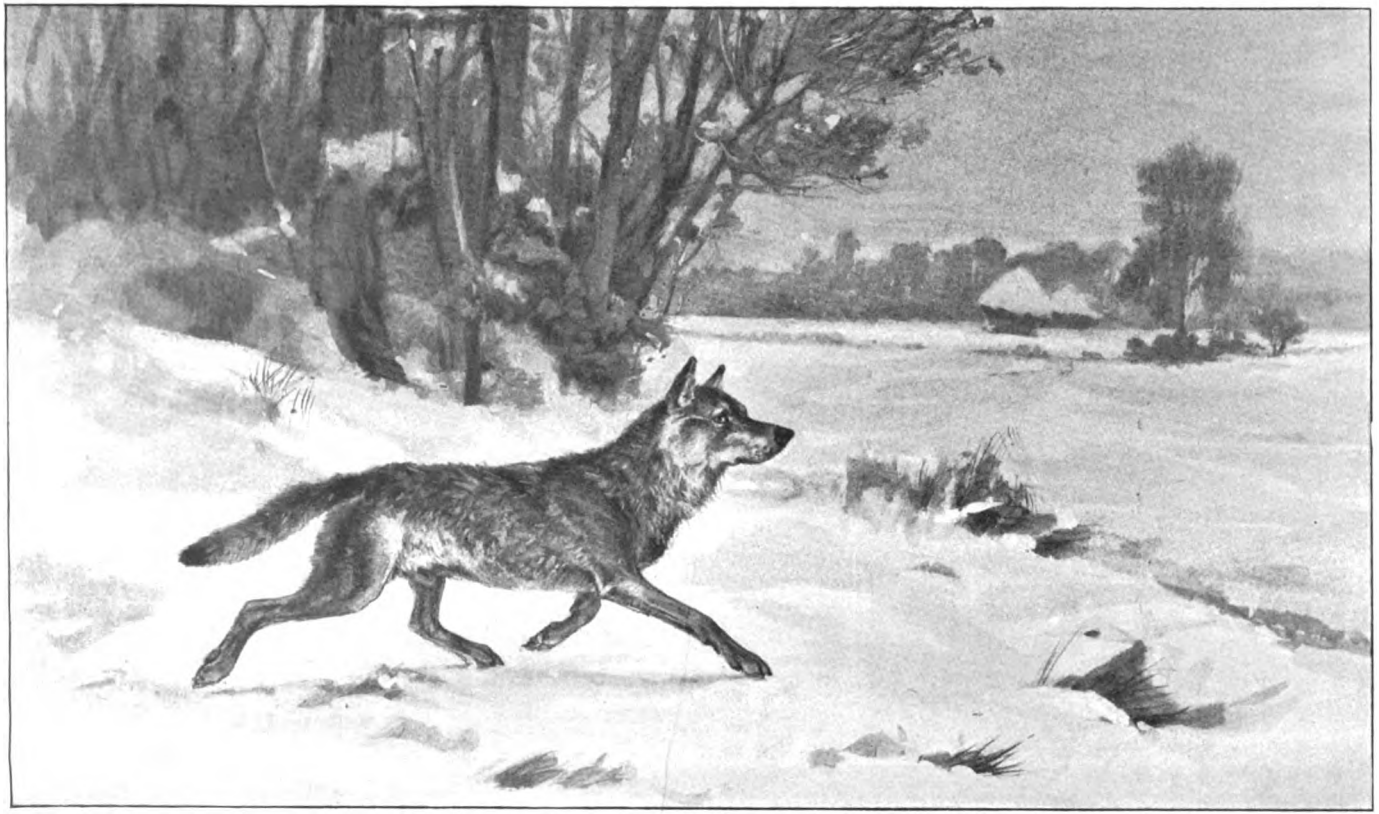
It is quite another thing when hunting in September, although even at that age cubs are already remarkably cunning and fight well to defend themselves. It is a very frequent thing to see a litter of young cubs allowing themselves to be tracked for hours in the same precincts, without one of them being made to break cover ; the hounds picking up the scent first of one, and then of another, and finally losing them all, because the mother, in her maternal solicitude, runs here and there, constantly crossing the line and offering herself to the hounds, thus attracts the danger she sees threatening her young.

There is no better mode of accustoming hounds to the scent of the wolf, and if the Duke of Beaufort's pack had had this training and had passed through the schooling, it is more then probable that at the first trial they would have hunted their cub ('louvart') with the same keenness that the hounds of the Poitou huntsmen display. Another observation that will not be out of place here is, that aptitude is transmitted in the same way as physical qualities, by heredity, and that young hounds, born of good wolf-hounds, take up at their very first lesson the scent, which is generally repugnant to those whose ancestors have never chased the wolf.

All the most distinguished men in the world of sport in France, all the members of the hunts in the provinces of Anjou, Berry, Angoumois, Limouzin, and Vendée, in addition to those of Poitou, were assembled to greet the Duke and to congratulate him on his introduction to the native sport ; many of them, who are still living, placed their services and their long experience at his disposal.

The assembly was so numerous that the business was greatly complicated, and many, not without reason, imputed to this the failure of the first trials.

There were present MM. le Vicomte Emile de la Besge,



TROTTING QUITE AT HIS EASE

now the veteran of French huntsmen, de Maichin, de Nonneville, de la Fourette, de Montbron, le Comte de Lorge, de la Débuterie, de Béjarry, Victor de Roux, le Prince de Sagan, le Baron de Courval, MM. de Daune, Hubert de la Borderie, le Comte d'Osmond, le Comte du Lau, le Comte de Ganay, Paul Géruzès, the Associates de la Moulière, all in full dress (*grande tenue*), and many others whom it would take too long to name, but all belonging to the pick of French sportsmen. Never had there been a more select or more numerous field.

The first hunt, fixed for April 1, was without result, no wolf being found. A fox, however, gave an hour and a half's run, and then got to ground. The Duke's hounds, being on their usual quarry, worked beautifully, although their master declared that, owing to the change of country, they were not so fast as usual.

The second meet on Tuesday, April 3, was fixed at seven o'clock in the morning in the forest of Verrières. It was arranged that MM. de Maichin, de la Besge and Guichard, three of the most experienced sportsmen of Poitou, should undertake to beat the woods, and that the hunt should follow the one who first got on the line of a wolf ; the native dogs should then be coupled and the Duke's hounds put on the scent. Fortune favoured M. Guichard, who had the good luck to start a wolf ; the animal having been seen crossing an alley, the French hounds were nearly all stopped and the foxhounds encouraged to advance ; some of them seemed to pick up the scent well, and took an active part in hunting with the native dogs that showed the way ; but after having roused the animal a second time they gave up a scent to which they were so unaccustomed and fell behind.

It must be understood that the crowd was very numerous, there was constant running to and fro, consequently the scent of the animal was foiled. The hounds, hustled and thrown into disorder, did not understand what was wanted of them, and seeming puzzled and disappointed, collected in little groups round the whips. It would be scarcely possible to conduct a trial under worse circumstances.

The third hunt was for the following Friday, April 6. The meet was to take place at the gamekeeper's lodge in the forest of Verrières. Here again the crowd was as great as on the first day.

Charles, M. de la Besge's whipper-in, had left his master's house, the Château de Persac, on the preceding evening and had

gone to sleep at Verrières, so as to be able to beat the woods, with two of his hounds, early in the morning. And he had done well, for at the time of the meet he had been tracking a wolf for more than an hour, and just as he was stooping down to examine the footprints, so as to note the age of the quarry he had disturbed, the animal jumped across the road a few yards in front of him. It was a good-sized wolf. The whip, consequently, called his hounds back, cut a branch and put it in the place whence the wolf sprang, so as to recognise which way he had passed, and waited for the huntsmen to arrive.

At half-past eight the hounds were uncoupled, and once more the foxhounds hesitated before taking up the scent. The Duke, seeing this, and not being in the least disconcerted at a misadventure which he more than half expected, followed the chase with enthusiasm like the true sportsman he was, and after a long run through the forest got in at the 'hallali' (death-whoop) just as M. de la Besge, dismounting, seized by the throat a fine young wolf with which the hounds were violently fighting. Several foxhounds that had followed the Duke attacked the animal in a most resolute way, and began tearing it to pieces.

It was an excellent lesson for them, and one from which they soon profited. Each new hunt, indeed, showed that the foxhounds were making rapid progress, and on April 24, in spite of the extreme dryness of the ground, which considerably increased the difficulty of following a scent so slight as that of the wolf, the Duke's hounds, without the help of a single French hound, had started a wolf quite of their own accord and followed it well for more than an hour. This last trial of the English hounds was certainly very much to their credit, and, in the opinion of all the sportsmen present, would undoubtedly have been brought to a brilliant finish if the huntsman, Clarke, had not been suddenly seized with a serious indisposition.

But the Duke, who was most kind and thoughtful to all his attendants, would not allow Clarke to risk his health, and ordered the hounds to be whipped off at once and the chase to be abandoned, thus most generously renouncing a well-earned and ardently longed-for success.

A few days later, after the Duke's departure, M. Guichard's and M. de Maichin's hounds, out for exercise and with no intention of hunting, found the scent of an 'old wolf' near the Forêt des Cartes, and chased it.

RUN DOWN

After a three hours' hot run, during which the wolf had twice attempted to give them the slip, once in the Forêt de Goueix and then in the Forêt de Verrières, the animal, making a circuit, returned to Cartes and faced the hounds. The keeper of the forest, attracted by the noise, and seeing an old wolf in the midst of the pack, shot it! MM. Guichard and de Maichin could not claim that they had hunted down an 'old wolf,' but the fact is worth mentioning.

It weighed forty kilogrammes (eighty French pounds) and the right paw was sent by M. de Maichin to the Duke of Beaufort, who gladly accepted this token of friendship from his fellow-sportsman.

THE RIGHT PAW OF AN 'OLD WOLF' PRESENTED TO THE DUKE OF BEAUFORT

The reasons of the non-success of the first few trials of the most justly renowned pack of hounds in England are easy to understand: the progress they so quickly made proves once more that to hunt any sort of animal wants knowledge and practice; and, especially for successfully hunting the wolf, whose scent is the faintest in existence, it is necessary to have hounds and huntsmen whose skill has been acquired by long habit and experience.

The Duke of Beaufort was to return to Poitou in the February of the next year, a much more favourable season than the one he had chosen, to renew an experiment which had been so very encouraging; and not one of the sportsmen who had assisted at these trials doubted for a moment that success would be complete, especially if the Duke consented, as some of the most experienced huntsmen proposed, to entrust a number of hounds from October onwards to the huntsmen of Poitou, who would have accustomed them to the scent by making them hunt the cubs, which are comparatively easy to take.

But the month of February passed and brought no Duke with it, although the same cordial reception awaited him as in the preceding year. The Vicomte de la Besge, one of the most celebrated wolf-hunters of Poitou, who had had the honour of receiving the Duke at his Château de Persac, and all the members of the hunting society of Verrières, proposed to offer the Duke new testimony of their wish to help him to realise the ardent desire he had expressed of having a pack of hounds

capable of hunting the wolf; all most sincerely regretted his absence.

The Duke, however, at the invitation of French huntsmen, greatly contributed to the success of the first Parisian Dog Show; half the hounds he had brought to hunt with him in Poitou then came to be admired in the Jardin Zoologique du Bois de Boulogne, where the show was held. Several packs of foxhounds were exhibited, but it was unanimously agreed that none was so fine as the Duke's. Smaller than the French foxhounds, they were remarkable for the perfection of their shape. Everything about them denoted perfect development of strength, agility, and muscular power; their delicate *distingué* heads, and the beautiful curve of their necks, gave them an elegant appearance which is not customary in this race of dogs; and while admiring these superb animals, it was not difficult to imagine what could be achieved by such hounds when they had hunted the wolf for a few generations.

'MAHALIE'

BY GEORGE COSSINS

HOT! so hot that the dry earth seemed to widen into little rifts before one's eyes—the leaves of the stunted trees to curl even their hardy foliage; so hot that the white tents outside the Fort dazed the eyes, till the encampment seemed one long blurred mass of glittering haze, and the swarms of blue flies, settled on the putrid remains of a bullock, just beyond the limits of the little camp, appeared overcome and listless, buzzing sleepily over their loathsome feast.

So hot that the weary sentries, leaning over the bastions, could not touch the metalled butts of their rifles, and the troop horses on the plains, standing in little groups, with bent crests and wide-opened nostrils, beneath the scanty shade of the mimosas, made no effort to graze, but stood dejected and dispirited, showing no sign of life beyond an occasional languid swish with their tails when their natural enemies, the African tick, roused them by a more than ordinary sharp attack from their stupor.

And in the Fort only the occasional sound of the sentries' steps broke the monotonous silence ; the roofs of the thatched huts which lined the walls threw no shadow on the dry baked earth, for the sun was overhead and in its zenith. From one of the huts issues a bugler in the uniform of the 'Jagers,' and presently, apparently acting upon instructions from within, he sounds a bugle call.

From behind the huts, from the moist recesses of the moat, from under the store waggons, from all sorts of hiding-places appear some ten or twelve Kafir boys dressed in miscellaneous garbs, and lazily they proceed to the various huts, whence they presently issue bearing the rations and cooking utensils of the various messes ; for these boys are the cooks, and right good cooks too some of them, though prone to pilfer small fragments of the repasts they are preparing, when opportunity offers.

'Mahalie ! Mahalie !' comes a loud cry from one of the huts and—

'Mahalie ! Mahalie ! you young imp !' rings out again a moment or two later.

The Kafir boys busily engaged beyond the walls show their white teeth and shrug their half-naked shoulders.

'Tcha—Mahalie !' they cry in derision.

'Mahalie ! Hang the boy, where the dickens has he got to ?' growls a tall bearded trooper, dressed in boots and breeches, a felt hat, and rough grey shirt open at the front and showing a neck and chest tanned to a deep brown ; and as he speaks he issues from the hut, and shading his eyes with his hands inspects the little group outside the Fort.

'U pi Mahalie ?' he cries impatiently.

'Hi kona, Baas,' chorus the Kafir boys, shaking their woolly heads to emphasise their assertion.

'Confound the little beggar, I'll screw his neck when I catch him,' mutters the man angrily as he steps back and re-enters the hut.

He is a big, rough, hairy fellow this, with a reddish-brown beard and traces of dissipation on his bronzed weather-beaten face, yet his manner is not all ungentle as he steps across the tiny hut and kneels down by the form of a young lad barely out of his teens—a lad with a white face all drawn and lined with pain, and eyes that are clouded and heavy. He wears only a pair of loose trousers, and his bare chest, white as a little child's, is bandaged tightly with long bands of linen.

'Arthur, old chap, the boy has cleared out, so I'll have to

cook the stuff myself,' says the big fellow as the dull eyes turn inquiringly to him.

'I don't want any; don't bother!' replies a weak and fretful voice.

'Oh, hang it all, you must eat, man! Look here: we'll have some soup anyway, and I'll make some fresh leather-jackets.'

'I can't eat anything—is there any tyuala?' [1]

'No—all gone, my boy; but I'll make you some tea.'

'Oh,' groans the other pettishly, 'I'm sick of tea—tea with-

'PULL ME ROUND? WHAT, WITH A HOLE IN ME LIKE THIS?'

out milk; and the water!—the water is *beastly;* I'm sick of it all. If only there was some milk, I've been dreaming of that, just one good cool drink—just that and some bananas, if I could have that I would want nothing more; but that *soup*—stinking stuff—and those leather-jackets - Gad! at home the labourers get better food than that.'

'Don't get down in the mouth, Arthur, the supplies will be up soon, and the doctor will put you in the hospital as soon as there is room.'

'When some other fellow dies,' is the bitter reply.

[1] Kafir beer.

'Or gets well. Come, rouse up, old boy. We'll pull you round.'

'Pull me round? What, with a hole in me like this? Bah! I don't want to pull round. The sooner I go underground the better, and no one will care much either,' mutters the other peevishly.

'D—n it all!' says the trooper softly to himself as he goes out into the glaring sunlight, 'it is a shame to feed the lad on this muck, but there's nothing else.'

Taking summary possession of one of the fires, he puts a pot on to boil, oblivious of the grimaces and gesticulations of the dusky little cook who has the prior claim.

Presently he returns to the hut for something, and the wounded lad turns wearily to see him: the pale cheeks are a little flushed and the eyes brighter.

'Has he come? Has he got it?' he asks eagerly.

'Who? What?'

'Mahalie—the milk and bananas—he said he would. Oh, Jack, my throat is so dry—hasn't he got them?'

'Arthur! how could he get them? There is no place within a hundred miles of this where they could be got—except the enemies' kraals, and he couldn't go there.'

'He said it—he promised me,' moaned the other wearily.

His companion looked at him anxiously, but made no reply, and presently walked thoughtfully to the foot of the nearest bastion and hailed the sentry.

'Have you seen my boy about at all?'

'Mahalie?'

'Ay.'

'No. Why?'

'I can't find him, and he seems to have promised young Arthur Blake that he would get him some milk and bananas. I'm half afraid he'll go up to Matulini's kraal and get shot.'

'Not he—most likely the young beggar's asleep somewhere under the waggons.'

'Maybe,' and Jack Farrent walked away, and the while he watched the cooking of the scanty meal puffed great clouds of tobacco from under his thick moustache.

'Hang it all!' he says at last, 'if I thought there was the barest chance of getting either bananas or milk for him, I'd risk it, by Gad I would!'

An hour later when Arthur Blake had reluctantly swallowed a small pannikin-full of soup, and feebly eaten a mouthful or

two of leather-jacket, the sentry challenged Jack Farrent as he made his way towards the river with a rifle slung at his back and a bucket on his arm.

'Going for water? All right. By gosh! *isn't* it hot?' says the sentry. 'Haven't you found that boy yet?'

There was no answer. Jack was striding along over the bare hot ground towards the river and was presently hidden from view as he descended its rough banks.

But he did not fill the bucket, he planted it carefully amongst the tall green rushes lining the river's edges, and followed the course of the creek westwards, till he was right abreast of the horse-guards; then clambering up the banks, he made his way towards them, carefully keeping himself hidden from the observation of those in the Fort.

Presently one of the horse-guards caught sight of the advancing figure and came up, rifle in hand, at a sharp gallop.

'Who goes there? stop, or I fire!'

'Friends—Ned.'

'H'm!' says the other, riding up close, 'what brings you here?'

'I'll tell you afterwards—who is on guard on the bend opposite the Kafir village?"

'Charlie—do you want him? he's somewhere by that clump of trees; you'd better not cross there on foot, though; the Kafir track runs just thereabouts.'

'All right, I'm awake.' And Jack pursued his devious way towards the spot indicated.

He was almost upon the guard before the latter saw him, and could see that something was attracting his attention westwards, for he was standing up in his stirrups and scrutinising the adjacent hillside in an anxious manner.

'Charlie!'

'Jack! Confound you—what the dickens did you startle me like that for, hang you! I was nearly letting drive at you.'

'I'm on the look-out for Mahalie; have you seen him?'

'Yes; the young beggar passed here a couple of hours ago to get some roots or something for the youngster.'

'Hasn't he come back?'

'No—not this way.'

'What were you looking at when I came up?'

'A bit of a row up at the chief's kraal: some of their sentries ran down from their posts about ten minutes ago, and I thought

perhaps the supply waggons had hove in sight and they were going to try and cut them off.'

'I believe they've got hold of Mahalie,' said the other, and in a few words related what Arthur Blake had told him.

'By Jove, Jack, I believe you're right. Look there!'

Both men looked intently at the hillside. Some twenty or thirty Kafir warriors and a few women and boys were passing rapidly down the hillside apparently searching for something.

'I see him! I see him! there by the big rocks beyond the prickly-pear hedge—he's coming down the other side.'

And there, sure enough, dimly discernible against the black rocks, a slight bent figure was moving cautiously downward.

Slowly he crept from rock to rock, keeping himself screened from the searchers, and bit by bit he drew nearer and nearer the foot of the mountain, till at last he was almost in the shelter of the friendly bushes that grew close up to the last few straggling boulders.

Puff! Puff! and two little clouds of smoke wreathed themselves in the air.

Bang! Bang! came the echoing reports of two heavy rifles from the side of the Krantz.

With a rush the little black figure sped across the remaining distance and was lost to sight, and down in hot pursuit came the savage foes, crushing through the bushes and shouting to each other.

Bang! Bang! went the rifles of the two troopers simultaneously.

'Jack, old man, I must round up the horses. You'd better get on one of them and ride for it; there goes the bugle. The horses will stampede presently. Hurry up, man! don't you hear the alarm sounding?'

'Let it sound. I'm not going back on that boy.'

'You can do no good. Come on before it's too late: the Swazie lad will get through without you.'

'Go back yourself; it's your duty.'

'All right—the other chaps have started the horses. Good-bye.' And away went Charlie in the rear of the excited troop horses, no longer supine now, but with streaming manes and tails, and ears turning backwards and forwards, galloping amidst a cloud of dust towards the Fort. Jack Farrent, left alone, took up as good a position as he could find behind some thick bushes, and stood alert and silent, listening to the yells of the pursuers as they came steadily on.

ON THEY COME

He could hear them distinctly now.

They had not fired again, he was sure of that, and unless they had got close enough to assegai the boy he was safe so far.

Presently from out the brushwood close by crept several dark figures, and Jack ground his teeth as he noticed that their lurking-place was within fifty yards of where the boy would probably cross the fringe of brushwood and enter the plain where the larger trees grew. A bending of twigs, and out into the open came a Kafir boy—naked—bearing on his back a net bag, and in his hands a calabash or gourd. On he came, swiftly in spite of his burden—on, on, to his hidden foes.

Jack could see the head of one of them cautiously raised as he watched his prey drawing nearer.

Bang!

'That's one for you, you skulking brute!' quoth Jack grimly, as he slipped another cartridge into his smoking rifle. Then, raising his voice, he cried:

'Woza lapa, Mahalie! *Lapa!*'

Great as the distance was the keen little Swazie lad heard and altered his direction.

A puff of smoke from one of the hidden foes, half a dozen puffs from the edge of the bush, and Jack felt a sharp twinge in his shoulder.

'Winged,' he grunted, 'curse them!'

The boy was unharmed, and within a short distance—close behind, almost upon him now—came one of his pursuers, and close behind half a dozen more vieing with each other in the race for the lad's life.

Up goes the foremost Kafir's arm.

'Missed him! ah!' and Jack grinds his teeth in rage as the boy falls headlong to the earth with an assegai quivering in his bare little body.

On they come—they have seen him too.

Bang, bang!—whiz, whiz!—and rough Jack Farrent goes down with a sound in his ears like rushing water—then yells and savage oaths, the thunder of horses' feet.

'Wheel! Halt! Cease firing, men!'

'Halt, I tell you!'

And Jack is raised in strong arms, and the liquor he loves—alas! only too well—is poured freely into his mouth.

He opened his eyes. 'Mahalie, over there!' he manages to say.

And bearing him with them the troop ride slowly towards the little form that lies so still and quiet in the sun's hot glare.

No more mischievous tricks again, Mahalie! No more sitting by the little Baas Arthur and forcing the white lips to a faint smile with your quaint broken speech. Not again, Mahalie, little Swazie lad—never again!

Lieutenant von Beethen bends over him.

'Not dead—near it, though. Nearly over now—poor little beggar.'

Jack's dazed brain is clearer now, and he slowly makes his way through the cluster of troopers—most of whom look pityingly down on the dying boy, for they are not hard of heart, these rough frontiersmen; coarse and dissipated perhaps, but with oh! such tender hearts beneath their rough buff uniforms.

Jack has edged his way in now.

'Mahalie boy!'

'Baas Jack?'

The trooper's rough scarred hand goes lightly down on the curly head, but before he can speak again the dying eyes glisten with sudden light, the full lips, streaked now with leaden lines, twitch, and a broken little voice whispers:

'Milk—b'nanas—little white Baas Arthur—Mahalie's little white Baas——'

And then with a quiver the small slim figure stiffens—relaxes—stiffens again, and Mahalie has gone—gone to the silent land beyond the mountains.

* * * * *

It was six months afterwards when Jack, slowly becoming convalescent, heard fuller details from Arthur.

'I was a selfish beast,' the latter said regretfully, 'but I was so ill, I really don't think I realised what he was going to attempt for me. I shall never forget him, or you either, Jack—I used to be horribly brusque to you.'

'Oh, ay, now and again; but, you see, you'd been brought up differently, and you're such a youngster. Where did they bury him?'

'Come round and I'll show you.'

Not where the white soldiers lay row upon row waiting in their silent African graves the signal for their last reveillé—not there, of course, was the Kafir lad laid to rest; surely no trumpet sounds for such as he, one of the uncivilised Kafir tribes on whom the white men vent their scorn, and whose land they take for an heritage! Ah, brave hearts, true hearts

—hearts like those which beat in the breasts of the men who bore the body of dead Livingstone thousands of miles through swamp and forest, over desert plains and mountain ridges—great hearts beneath black skins, *that* is no place for you beside the warrior men of the great White Queen.

Ah, no, not there; but by the group of stunted trees, where the great ant-heap makes a landmark on the plain, there is a rough slab on which is roughly carved

SHOOTING RECOLLECTIONS

BY THE HON. A. E. GATHORNE-HARDY

How well I remember my first gun, although it is more than forty years since it was put into my hands! It was a pretty little single-barrelled weapon, 16-bore, of course a muzzle-loader, and had previously belonged to my two elder brothers, descending to me in my turn when they had been promoted to double barrels and game licences. I had before this been allowed an occasional shot at blackbirds, or sitting rabbits; but what bliss it was when I could boast of a gun of my own! There never was such a weapon! You may talk of your perfect hammerless ejectors, choke bores, single triggers, all the latest developments and improvements, but although the rising generation is fitted with its weapons now as accurately and scientifically as a dandy is invested with his wedding suit, I doubt whether they do not lose something in the pleasure of the long process of loading. First the powder was measured and poured in from the flask; then the wad, probably punched out of an old hat with your own hands, carefully rammed down; next the ramrod sent ringing down the barrel, and then the same whole process was repeated with the shot. I was instructed to see that my ramrod rebounded freely from the charge, to show that it was well rammed home, and that only about a hand's breadth protruded from the barrel to prove that the charge had been accurately measured and that no careless handling of flask or shot pouch had produced a too liberal flow of powder or shot. So,

too, I was specially instructed to hold the barrel slanting away from my head when ramming down the charge, and not to put my hand over the muzzle when pouring in the powder. Lastly, there was the cap to be picked out of the waistcoat pocket and carefully adjusted on the nipple, and there was the whole article complete—warranted to bring down a rabbit or sparrow at thirty yards, if—and this was a good-sized if—it was held straight. But if 'ingenuous youth,' as Mr. Jorrocks terms beginners, loses something by being deprived of these delights, it may comfort itself with the reflection that it has gained a good deal in safety as well as in expedition. There were more accidents connected with loading than with any other part of the use of the gun. Numberless hands and fingers were blown off by the powder exploding when poured into the barrel where there was left some smouldering bit of wad or paper, and many a gun burst owing to the wad not having been properly rammed home or from some other bit of carlessness on the part of the owner. *Laudator temporis acti* although I may be, I can hardly wish to return to the muzzle-loader, notwithstanding that I feel a certain amount of sentimental sympathy for an old friend pushed aside by the ringing wheels of change, and relegated to obscurity and extinction with the stage coach and the Great Auk.

Soon it will be a mark of antiquity to have been associated with the use of muzzle-loaders; but I can link myself, although not directly, with a still remoter past. I was at school near Quorn when the news came of the death of Sir Richard Sutton, the hero and idol of the neighbourhood. That fine old English squire shot with a flint-and-steel gun to the last. So at least one specimen of that obsolete weapon was in regular use at the time I began to shoot. I was encouraged to go about by myself, and to shoot at anything except game which was either mischievous and harmful, like a jackdaw or hawk, or eatable—the proof of the latter qualification being my willingness to eat it myself. Game was strictly reserved for those of the family who had licences, for my father was old-fashioned enough to consider it wrong to cheat the revenue, or to wink at breaches of the law by his own children which he desired to see strictly enforced against poachers and ne'er-do-weels. I must say that I entirely agree with his views, and have little sympathy with the laxity which is apt to relegate the game laws to temporary abeyance in the case of schoolboys home for the holidays.

I am not going to weary the reader by a detailed chronicle of the very small beer of my early experiences. I did not

[illegible] tolerable shot until much later; but I was gaining confidence and accustoming myself to the safe and cautious management of the weapon before I was allowed to join in [illegible] expeditions or to go out with a companion. Every [illegible] I had a day's ferretting with a keeper, who was [illegible] and instruct me, with plenary authority, if necessary, to deprive me of my weapon if I fired a careless or dangerous shot; but I was, happily, never subjected to that indignity. Next I was allowed to join parties rabbit shooting with beagles—and great sport it was to see these miniature fox-hounds bustling through the coverts with all the eagerness and excitement of their more aristocratic relatives, and to hear their cheery voices giving tongue nearer and nearer, until bunny came in sight, possibly to roll over to a well-directed shot from my ambush above the honey-combed bank towards which he was making his point. Lastly I was allowed to join the regular shooting parties, confining my attention to the rabbits and hares which broke back or escaped the other guns. But this privilege was not granted to me until I was fairly familiar with the use of the gun, and was temporarily withdrawn more than once when excitement or the exuberant high spirits of youth had led me to transgress by a hair's breadth the due bounds of caution. I am afraid I have since been out with many shooting parties in which one or more members have taken part without any preliminary novitiate; but I confess that I think my father's plan the best, and consider it a dangerous and unwarrantable thing to conduct the elementary instruction of young shooters at the expense and risk of unfortunate guests who have been beguiled into learning the sport under conditions which make it 'the image of war without its guilt, and *more* than 25 per cent. of its danger.' There are enough hardened offenders of mature age whom it is difficult always to avoid. 'Were you at the battle of Waterloo?' was a question put to one of my elderly acquaintances. 'No,' was the reply, 'I was never in action—but I have been out shooting with Sir Blank Asterisk!'

One incident stands out in my memory during those early days—a day's snipe shooting in the marshes near Appledore. My father to whom the ground belonged had written to say that there were a good many snipe about, and it is needless to say that I eagerly embraced the opportunity of making the acquaintance of that sporting little bird. The long drive over, I was surprised to see a perfect crowd of people emerge from the usually deserted station of Appledore, but they had not

THERE WERE A GOOD MANY SNIPE ABOUT

become even a tolerable shot until much later ; but I was gaining confidence and accustoming myself to the safe and cautious management of my weapon before I was allowed to join in shooting expeditions or to go out with a companion. Every now and then I had a day's ferretting with a keeper, who was told to watch and instruct me, with plenary authority, if necessary, to deprive me of my weapon if I fired a careless or dangerous shot ; but I was, happily, never subjected to that indignity. Next I was allowed to join parties rabbit shooting with beagles—and great sport it was to see these miniature foxhounds bustling through the coverts with all the eagerness and excitement of their more aristocratic relatives, and to hear their cheery voices giving tongue nearer and nearer, until bunny came in sight, possibly to roll over to a well-directed shot from my ambush above the honey-combed bank towards which he was making his point. Lastly I was allowed to join the regular shooting parties, confining my attention to the rabbits and hares which broke back or escaped the other guns. But this privilege was not granted to me until I was fairly familiar with the use of the gun, and was temporarily withdrawn more than once when excitement or the exuberant high spirits of youth had led me to transgress by a hair's breadth the due bounds of caution. I am afraid I have since been out with many shooting parties in which one or more members have taken part without any preliminary novitiate ; but I confess that I think my father's plan the best, and consider it a dangerous and unwarrantable thing to conduct the elementary instruction of young shooters at the expense and risk of unfortunate guests who have been beguiled into joining the sport under conditions which make it 'the image of war without its guilt, and *more* than 25 per cent. of its danger.' There are enough hardened offenders of mature age whom it is difficult always to avoid. 'Were you at the battle of Waterloo?' was a question put to one of my elderly acquaintances. 'No,' was the reply, 'I was never in action—but —I have been out shooting with Sir Blank Asterisk!'

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come to interfere with my prior claim to the snipe : they were merely the principals and spectators in a prize fight, who had come down to that remote spot to be out of the way of magistrates and police. I did not stop to watch their proceedings, but devoted myself to the business of the day. Snipe were there in great numbers, but very wild ; and I shot away all my ammunition with the net result of a bag of two snipe and a wild duck. So eventful a day was marked by portents to the end, for, as I drove home in the dark, I saw the most remarkable and beautiful meteor it has ever been my lot to behold. It shot half across the heavens, increasing in brilliancy till it lighted up the whole atmosphere, before it apparently burst and disappeared, as I conjectured, not far off. It must have been a real phenomenon, as there were many letters in the papers from others who had seen it in remote and distant parts of England.

I was about sixteen when I was advanced to a licence and a double barrel ; but my first efforts at partridges and pheasants were not marked by even the moderate degree of proficiency to which I had attained at rabbits, wood pigeons, and smaller game. Possibly I suffered from something analagous to the stag fever which disturbs the aim of incipient stalkers, but for the first few weeks I missed lamentably and persistently, until I almost despaired of ever killing anything. I do not know whether other people's experience is like my own, but my shooting came at last like a flash or revelation ; and, after my first pheasant, omitting certain dubious and accidental birds good-naturedly scored to my account, I became a fair shot within a week, and never went back again to my old form. This great event took place at Norfolk, where one of my uncles had rented a manor, and there I first took part in really good covert shooting. I was the only one who had not got two guns and a loader ; and my poor little 16-bore more than once struck work after a hot corner, until I had borrowed a pin, cleared out the nipple and put a little powder in under the cap. It was here that I first saw a breech-loader, then quite a new invention—a pin fire with lever action of the most primitive type, which was regarded as a sensational and remarkable innovation.

It would be tedious and tiresome were I to continue to trace my individual progress from one weapon to another, but I do not think that any later development of the gunmaker's art can compare for importance with the step from the muzzle-loader

to the breech-loader. Much danger and a great deal of labour in cleaning then disappeared at once and for ever. And such minor improvements as snap action, rebounding locks, getting rid of the hammer safety bolts, and lastly, ejectors, are each and all of them rather developments of the same idea than revolutionary novelties. If I were asked to say what had added most to the sportsman's comfort since the invention of the breech-loader, I should point to the substitution of nitro-compounds for the old black powder. The comparative absence of jar, noise, and smoke have saved many a headache and sore finger, and I would almost as soon go back to a flint and steel, or even a cross-bow, as voluntarily employ the old explosive.

At the risk of being called an old fogey, I must be permitted to express my doubts whether the modern extreme development of preserving is altogether an improvement. I am not going to inveigh against the 'battue,' or sigh for the days of the spaniel and the hedgerow pheasant, but I should like to ask a quorum of representative sportsmen whether they really enjoy a shoot when the birds are slaughtered in thousands, however well put over the guns, more than one where some three to four hundred birds, well distributed through the day, fell to six or seven guns. Personally, I am satisfied with a much more moderate allowance; but there, I fear I am in a decided minority. I am, however, sure that I am speaking within the mark when I say that in the last forty years the number of places where a thousand or more pheasants are killed in a day has multiplied more than twenty times. This is not altogether the fault of individual landowners. Just as the successful barrister or doctor, after a period of struggle, finds it impossible to refuse briefs or patients so as to limit an overwhelming business, so the energy and activity of keepers often increases the stock in the coverts far beyond the limits originally contemplated by their masters. A is anxious to go one better than B, B next year strives to regain his old supremacy, and so on. But whatever may be the cause I, for one, regret the consequence. The changes in partridge-shooting are more inevitable and automatic. The dear old days with Ponto and Rake ranging the turnips and stubbles, and dropping motionless to shot, are gone never to return, partly from altered agricultural conditions, but mainly from the great increase of pheasants. In spite of larger pasture lands and shaved stubble-fields, there are still many places where dogs might be successfully worked. But

what is the good of taking out pointers or setters when after a long and successful draw through turnips the inevitable half-grown pheasant flops out at the end? Drive the little brown bird by all means: it is now a weariness to the flesh to stumble along in line through thick swedes or champion potatoes. I speak only of the present. When I was more active and energetic my taste was catholic enough to enjoy that sport also; and I have tramped the big fields of Kincardineshire with the late Sir John Gladstone, who did not share his younger and more famous brother's indifference to sport. He had an enormous pair of many-buttoned gaiters carried with him on a pony, and, as he put them on and took them off on entering and leaving each turnip-field, the halts were many and rather tedious.

I have witnessed few accidents of a serious character, but enough narrow escapes to cause me to preach and, I hope, practise, caution. I have seen a good many people peppered, and have myself still got sixteen shot in my back and one in my head, if not more. 'Shoot away, sir, shoot away, sir, you won't hurt me,' was the good-natured but incorrect prophecy of a keeper when I, in my early days, hesitated to fire at a rabbit running between us. *Volenti non fit injuria*, but he got a good many shots—fortunately only skin deep—in the region of the gaiters and thereabouts. The worst accident I ever saw can hardly be rightly described by that name. One of our party put the greater part of a charge of shot into the legs of an old man who had concealed himself in the thick underwood just across a ride towards which we were beating. No caution could have avoided such a catastrophe under the circumstances; for it afterwards turned out that he had had a dispute with his wife and had ended it by saying that the shooters were in the next wood, and that he would go out and get himself shot. He did not seem badly hurt, and was pleased and grateful at the present of £2 which he received, but I heard that he died soon afterwards, although it was doubtful how far his wounds, which did not seem serious, contributed to the result.

Marshal Bazaine used to be a terrible offender out shooting, and fired away quite regardless of his surroundings, under the impression, as he remarked, that small shot really did not hurt. The danger to life and limb is certainly not very great, but very small shot at a considerable range may deprive a man of his eyesight, and there are enough one-eyed calenders going about to point and enforce the moral of the criminal folly of reckless

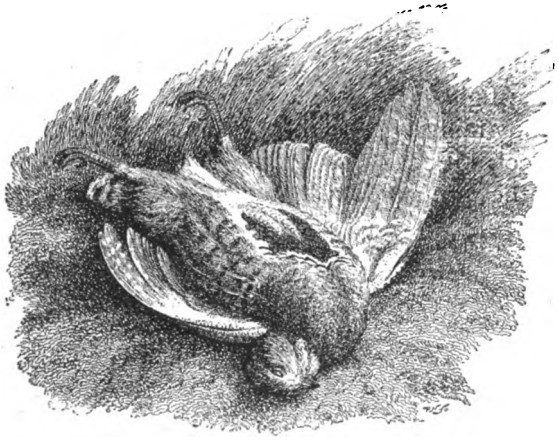
shooting. It sometimes almost takes my breath away to see how shots are fired at pheasants skimming five or six feet above the underwood ; and many who do not yield to such moderate temptation are not proof against the allurements of the more seductive woodcock. Providence is kind, and we all know how many men escape unhurt from a hail of fire intentionally and skilfully directed towards them.

It is the fashion to sneer at foreigners, but some of the best sportsmen and finest shots come from beyond the Channel. They have, however, often a tendency rather to spoil the ship for a halfpenny worth of tar, by not giving enough for their guns. I remember a member of a foreign embassy who was my father's guest at Hemsted—a really fine shot and a most agreeable companion. But he was not accustomed to the stiff clays of Kent, for he wore a pair of low, patent-leather shoes, one or both of which generally came off when he crossed a fallow, and he had a gun which did pretty good execution when it went off, but which often refused to explode his cartridges at all. He was much impressed at my father's gun, and asked him where he got it and what was its cost. But when he heard the price his jaw fell and he said, 'Good heavens! we could get a gold gun for that in Germany!' A first-rate maker's charges are undoubtedly high, but the interest on the initial outlay on a really first-rate weapon is bagatelle compared to the other inevitable annual expenses of the sport. I hesitate to repeat many anecdotes that I have heard, for I have known certain widely popular 'Collections and Recollections' described as 'Chestnuts and Horse-chestnuts,' and most sporting stories have a flavour of hoary antiquity. I have a weakness, however, for the adventure of the old Lord Albemarle and his son, Viscount Bury. When the latter was well above fifty the old Waterloo veteran, his father, came out to have a few shots, attired in the antiquated top hat which he never gave up wearing. Lord Bury fired at a rocketing pheasant coming towards him and it fell upon his father's hat, completely bonneting him. 'My boy,' said the old gentleman, in a towering rage, as soon as he had extricated his head from his battered tile, 'I know you did that on purpose! Give up your gun and go home!' Tradition asserts that the obedient son deferred to this somewhat belated exercise of parental discipline. I have been hit myself by a falling pheasant, and have seen others also struck ; but it would take a good man intentionally to bonnet another, and I never saw any one really hurt at a hot corner, although

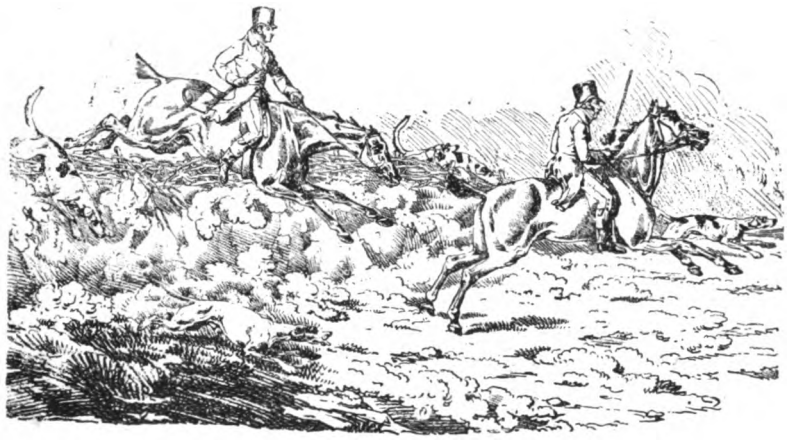
the weight and velocity of a pheasant or grouse falling from a height might well inflict serious injury.

I have, of course, known many keepers, and most of them have been excellent, hardworking, honest fellows, anxious to show sport ; but the perfect keeper is yet to be discovered. The temper of an archangel, the organising power of the Sirdar, the financial ability of a Gladstone, the courtesy of a Bayard, and a few other qualities, should be combined to make such a paragon. So, perhaps, we may have to wait a little longer for his appearance. At present we have to bear with shortcomings. The successful pheasant-breeder is found wanting in the control of his men or the management of dogs, or possibly he quarrels with the neighbouring farmers—a fault which ought never to be overlooked, as game preserving is not worth doing at all if it involves you in trouble with your neighbours. Some keepers become dishonest. Their business gives them many temptations in that direction, but their fall is often to be traced to the neglect and apathy of their employers. I have seldom met a coward among them, usually they are too much disposed to be 'spoiling for a fight'; but drink is, unfortunately, still the cause of a good many failures, although I can trace some improvement in that respect. Perhaps the commonest failing of a minor character is the intense desire to kill pheasants *quocunque modo*. The average man wants his birds killed and gathered, and it is almost impossible to convince him that all real pleasure depends upon the way they are driven over the guns. Persuasion is useless in such cases, and the only thing is to take the management of the drives into one's own hands, and to insist on the birds being sent over trees and valleys, at the risk of some being missed, or even being got by a neighbour. This last is the direst blow of all, for few indeed are the keepers who can bear to see any birds driven in a direction outside the boundaries of their beats. They are not often great at natural history—a fact somewhat surprising when one considers their unrivalled opportunities for observation. I have known more than one keeper within a comparatively recent period who believed that cuckoos turned into hawks after the summer, and another in Scotland accused the woodcocks of destroying the wild turkeys' eggs, combating the doubts mildly expressed by asserting that he had seen them in the nests with their beaks and legs all over yelk! It is not easy to beg off any bird or animal on the proscribed list of vermin, and a deep-rooted conviction of the destructive habits of most creatures is a cardinal article of faith in many

bucolic minds. It is satisfactory, however, to note that owls and kestrels are far more largely preserved as time goes on, and that many masters successfully insist on sparing some of the rarer carnivorous birds in spite of their more doubtful record. Game preserving, no doubt, incidentally protects much more than it destroys ; and populous countries where sporting rights are neglected are as a rule singularly bare of animal and bird life of interest. I believe the old prejudice against the Game Laws is gradually dying out, and that the population of all classes realise how much they would lose if country life were rendered less attractive and the sporting instincts, to which we owe so much, checked and discouraged.



'The covert's utmost bound
Slily she skirts' . . .



PINK AND SCARLET; OR, HUNTING AS A SCHOOL FOR SOLDIERING

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL E. A. H. ALDERSON

'WE have one incalculable advantage which no other nation possesses, in that our officers are able to hunt; than which, combined with study, there is, during peace, no better practice for acquiring the gift which Kellermann naturally possessed.'[1]

''Unting, my beloved 'earers, is the sport of kings, the himage of war without its guilt and only five-and-twenty per cent. of its danger.'[2]

In the first of these quotations there seems to be more than sufficient justification for the title of these pages. As to the second—well, of all the many true sayings of that most enthusiastic old sportsman, Mr. Jorrocks, none is truer or more to the point than this.

'The image of war'—Mr. Jorrocks, speaking some thirty-five years ago—is borne out to-day by one of the keenest soldier-sportsmen of our age.

In using the above-quoted words, Sir Evelyn Wood was, as the name Kellermann naturally suggests, referring to cavalry officers; there is no doubt, however, that he considers that

[1] 'The Achievements of Cavalry,' p. 39: Sir Evelyn Wood.

[2] Mr. Jorrocks' lecture on hunting: 'Handley Cross,' p. 127.

hunting is equally good for officers of all branches of the Service.

Should the sceptical wish to go farther back for an opinion on this point, let them consider why the Duke of Wellington had a pack of hounds out in the Peninsula. Those must indeed have been grand days to soldier in—to hunt one day and fight the next! What could a soldier-sportsman possibly want more?

How was it that the Duke used to get his information during the campaign but by using well-mounted Staff officers, which General Marbot tells us with regret that the French were unable to catch; and where was it but in the hunting-field that these same officers acquired that eye for, and that quickness in getting across, country, which so effectually baffled the French cavalry?

Did not the hero of Waterloo say of that king of sportsmen, Assheton Smith, 'he would have made one of the best cavalry officers in Europe'? * * *

An officer in an English militia regiment (who is now dead) managed, by hook or by crook, to get attached to the Staff of the French General Bourbaki, and was present with that officer during most of the engagements round Belfort in the early part of 1871. During one of these engagements the General and his Staff were with a portion of the troops who were engaged on one side of a valley while another portion were engaged on the other. He wished the latter to advance, and sent an aide-de-camp with the order.

The valley was intersected with fences, and cut in two by a considerable brook; and the aide-de-camp, no doubt influenced by these rather than by the German shells, which were falling into the valley pretty freely, turned and galloped down the road, apparently with the object of following it round the head of the valley. Five minutes passed, ten minutes passed, without any move on the part of the troops across the valley. Then the General sent another aide-de-camp, who went off the same way. A quarter of an hour passed and still no move.

The rest of the story is better told by the principal actor in his own words (as near as we can remember them).

'It was most important for these troops to move, and at last I could stand it no longer, so I rode up alongside of him, saluted, and said:

'"Will you allow me to go with that order, sir?"

'"Yes, certainly," he replied.

'I was riding one of two Irish hunters I had managed to take out, and as soon as I was clear of the Staff I popped him

TAKING AN ORDER

over the bank out of the road we were in, and went off at a gallop straight down the hill. From our point of view the fences were not formidable ones, but they were blocked with partially thawed snow and looked awkward, and the take off was bad. I, however, took the old horse by the head, rammed him at them, and he never hesitated. We got over the brook with a scramble, rose the opposite hill, and delivered the order before either of the other messengers hove in sight. I then turned about and went back the same way.

'When I rode up to the General to report the order delivered he seemed very pleased and, among other things, said :

'"Do English officers always take orders in that way?"

'I could not help replying, "Yes, sir, they always go the nearest way with them."'

It was nothing but the 'education of the hunting-field' that enabled our countryman to score thus, and there is no need to comment further on the incident, unless it be to say that 'the nearest way' means, of course, the nearest *possible* way. It would not be the nearest way to try and go straight, and then get pounded half way (or fall and let your horse go) at an impossible fence. But there is no occasion to say this to a hunting-man * * *

Instances of the use of horsemanship and of 'hunting education' to the soldier might be multiplied *ad infinitum;* perhaps, however, it would be more convincing to the disbelievers if they would ask the soldiers of the present day a few questions. Let them inquire of the young cavalry officer what gave him that eye for country which enables him to say to himself confidently: 'Ah! that's Middle Wood'; or, 'By Jove! I must take the squadron to the right—those willows mean water'; or, 'We must take a pull in this heavy ground or the horses will be blown'; or, 'The troopers will just be able to get safely over this fence'; or ask him how he manages to keep his head and see which is the best way to go with such a rush of men and horses behind him? Again, how did he learn to tell when his horses are fit and when they are not, when they are tired and when they are fresh?

Say to him, O sceptical one, 'What taught you all this sort of thing, young Sabretache; was it the riding-school or was it the Cavalry Drill-book?'

Having done with the cavalry, pass to the young gunner and talk to him much in the same way. Inquire how he learnt to tell at a glance that yonder hill should be a good position for his guns, and that there is most likely a cart-track to it by those

stacks. Having decided this, what taught him to take his horse by the head and turn him out of the road over the bank, to open the next gate with a swing, and pop over the rails beyond in order to go and see *quickly* if the position was as good as he thought. Say to him, 'Well, did the "shop" or Shoeburyness teach you this?'

Ask the young beetle-crusher what enabled him to tell his corporal that his patrol must 'go through the rides in the wood'; or, 'There is a stream where the willows are, so you must follow the cart-track to the bridge'; or, 'You are quite safe from the cavalry as long as you keep that straggling boundary fence between them and you.' Again, how did he learn to take in the lie of the country at a glance and thus be able to say, 'Your detached post will be near that mill.' Ask him, 'Did they teach you this at Sandhurst, or was it on the barrack square that you picked it up?'

Will it convince you, O! disbeliever, if, in nine cases out of ten, in which the young idea you are questioning possesses the knowledge and the qualities indicated above, the answer is, 'Oh! it comes natural enough after having hunted a bit'?

Mark this, O! paterfamilias, O! nervous mother, and, O! estimable guardians, whose boys are, or would be, soldiers, and, O! commanding officers, whose subalterns would hunt. For this knowledge and these qualities are soldierly knowledge and qualities, and are, moreover, only a very few examples of what qualities and knowledge hunting can impart to your youngster; things, in fact, without which no man's soldiering education is complete.

We have Sir Evelyn Wood's authority for it that hunting can teach, and if you wish the apple of your eye to be a soldier, that is, *really* a soldier, and to have every advantage to make him so, then let him learn.

Father, do not say, 'I never had a horse in my time, and I don't see what he wants with it!'

Nervous mother, do not say, 'But it is so dangerous!' If hunting is the most dangerous thing your soldier will ever do, he will never really be a soldier—he will only play at it. Remember that hunting will give him the requisite nerve and decision to extricate himself from a much tighter fix than a roll with a horse. Besides, remember also poor Lindsay Gordon's lines:

> There ne'er was a game that was worth a rap,
> For a rational man to play,
> Into which no danger, no mishap,
> Could possibly find its way o o o

To look at the reverse of the medal, think, all of you—fathers, mothers, guardians, and commanding officers—what a pitiable and helpless object a man is who cannot ride when he becomes a mounted officer! It will be worse should such a one become a Staff officer, and, moreover, as such he will, except on an office stool, be practically useless; more than this even, for his consequent slowness and indirectness of movement when sent with an order may be actually harmful.

Again, think how ridiculous a man, placed in either of the above-named positions, will appear to many of those to whom he has to give orders, and in how many ways his want of knowledge will be apparent * * *

Sporting authors of late years do not seem to have gone much into the details and etiquette of hunting, and it may still be said that the two best and most instructive books on the 'Sport of Kings' are Beckford's 'Thoughts on Hunting' and 'Handley Cross,' read in conjunction with each other. Then come, perhaps, 'Mr. Romford's Hounds' and 'Sponge's Sporting Tour,' coupled with Whyte-Melville's 'Riding Recollections.' The last is the best book on the riding and the handling, &c. of a horse ever written, and its two chapters on riding to hounds cannot be beaten. 'The Life of a Fox,' by T. Smith (Arnold), is also excellent and most instructive. It gives and explains hunting language and terms, has pictures of a fresh and beaten fox, and of a good and bad hound, &c. There are, of course, many more works on, or introducing, the subject which the young idea can read at his leisure, but if he reads, and re-reads, so as to *understand* and thoroughly take in, the knowledge and the hints contained in the half-dozen books mentioned above, he may hunt till he is a hundred years old and find that he cannot add one iota to either * * *

There seems little doubt that soldiers, to whom hunting—and indeed all things for which leave is required—is a privilege, and not a right, and who can, therefore, have comparatively little of it, do get more value out of each of their one or two days a week when with their regiments, and their three, four, five, or six days (according to the state of the treasury chest) when on leave, than does the man who can hunt every day in the week all the season through. The latter does not know the delicious sense of freedom—of a schoolboy out for a holiday, in fact—which seems to be in the air as one rides out of the barrack-gate with two or three brother-officers, who are to be one's companions in the pleasures of 'the Image' as every keen

soldier hopes that they may some day be in the serious business of the Real.

With this feeling in the heart, a good horse between the legs, and the musical rhythm of his one! two! three! four! on the road, or his squelsh! squelsh! squelsh! squelsh! in the soft ground, or on the grass at the side of it, in the ear, a man could not be in better form for learning in that best and most delightful of ways—by observation * * *

During the manœuvres in Sussex in August 1897, Sir Redvers Buller, then Adjutant-General, said that he was sure officers commanding companies could not be aware how very much easier and quicker troops could be moved over rolling or uneven ground if its features were well considered, and movements directed more in conformity with the configuration of the country.

For no one is it more necessary to study and make good use of ground than it is for him who would ride to hounds with success; and at no sport or occupation will he see so much ground in one day, and have such opportunities of studying it with a view to getting over it in the easiest way.

We, therefore, have Sir Redvers Buller, our late Adjutant-General, with us in considering that soldiers should hunt, as we have seen that we have Sir Evelyn Wood, our present Adjutant-General. There is, however, no need to prove Sir Redvers' approval of hunting in this roundabout way, for he sets the example to others by hunting himself.

The foregoing is somewhat of a divergence, but one of the chief lessons we have to, and can, learn during our marches to the objective is to think about, and from this thinking to acquire the habit of deciding quickly—at a glance, in fact—how we should *use* ground under different conditions; and a weighty opinion like Sir Redvers' cannot fail to emphasise the importance of learning this lesson * * *

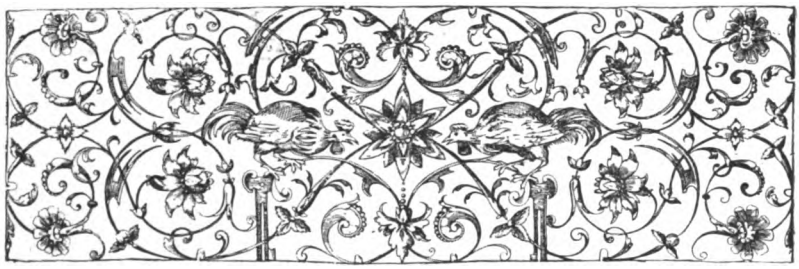
We top a rise and see below us a small grass vale with strong-looking stake-and-bound fences, and, what Mr. Jorrocks would call 'a nasty long Tommy bruk' winding down the middle of it, the course of which, where we cannot actually see its muddy-looking waters, is indicated by a line of pollard willow-trees.

The questions to be decided regarding it when in pursuit of the Image are, first, 'Is it jumpable?' and second, 'Where should we have it?' 'Riding Recollections,' the 'Badminton Library' books, and many others will tell us how to answer these

questions, but, after all, the best teacher is experience. One bit of advice can, however, be given safely, and that is: Unless you can ride at it as if there was no doubt whatever about the answer to both questions, do not do so at all. If you have doubt your horse will know it; he will have doubt too; and such an enterprise undertaken with doubt in the heart is nearly sure to end in disaster * * *

On our right hand we now have a considerable hill whose fenceless sides seem to indicate that it is the beginning of the downs. Should hounds run across here, which is the best way to ride up it? We cannot afford to let them slip us much, for they will probably run fast on the down above. Ah! that will be the way, past the old chalk-pit, behind those bushes, and then along the sheep-track, which runs diagonally up. That would also be the best way to take men, supposing there was no enemy on the top. And if there was? Why, we could not come near the part of the road we are now in at all, for the hill commands it all, and we should have had to halt behind that spur about three-quarters of a mile back, reconnoitre well, and then perhaps try to turn the hill by that lime-kiln * * *

To know the lie of the land will help you in riding to hounds, and if you can piece it in bit by bit as you go, and be able to say to yourself, as you gallop across the piece of country you have looked at on the map, 'Ah! now we are heading for Foxey Wood,' &c. &c., you are unconsciously acquiring those two most important qualities in the real thing—an eye for the country and a bump for locality * * *



A PRIZE COMPETITION

THE Proprietors of the BADMINTON MAGAZINE propose to offer a prize of Ten Guineas each month for the best original photograph sent in representing any sporting subject. Ten other prizes will also be given away each month, each of them consisting of an original drawing by one or other of the artists who illustrate the Magazine. Good clear pictures are of course necessary, and when possible the negative should be sent as well as the print. Every sportsman or sportswoman, and indeed, every boy or girl, who possesses a camera has a chance of gaining a prize. Competitors may also send any photographs they have by them on two conditions: that they have been taken by the sender, and that they have never been previously published. A few lines explaining when and where the photographs were taken should accompany each negative, and if the account of the scene extends to any length and can be utilised it will be paid for at the usual rate per page. Residents in the country who have access to shooting parties, or who chance to be in the neighbourhood when hounds are running, will doubtless find interesting subjects, and these will also be provided at football or cricket matches, wherever golf, cycling, fishing, skating, polo, athletics are practised. Racing and steeple-chasing, including Hunt Meetings and Point-to-point contests, should also supply excellent material. All matters of public school interest will be welcome.

We shall be unable to return any rejected matter except under special circumstances, and we reserve the right of using anything of interest that may be sent in, even if it should not receive a prize.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

IN the hall which was used as a dining-room at Badminton, on the left-hand side of the fireplace as one sat in front of the table which used to be drawn up after dinner, there stood in a glass case a stuffed wolf, which the Duke of Beaufort brought back from France when he took his hounds over, as recorded elsewhere in this number. M. Ernest Bellecroix evidently writes on the subject of this expedition with comprehensive knowledge ; that, I think, must be the opinion of all who read the paper ; but I gather from his article that the only wolf run down was torn to pieces, and the stuffed skin as I recollect it had not been injured. So far as I can remember, the Duke attributed the small success he experienced to the fact that some exceedingly potent manure was spread over the fields, entirely destroying all other scent ; but he was of opinion that with anything like fair luck the hounds would have been well able to account for their wolf. These wolves, it appears, go a great pace without seeming to be exerting themselves, and they have extraordinary staying power ; also they make a desperately hard fight for it when overtaken. But there is something peculiarly British

about the foxhound, who has a way of strenuously and resolutely fulfilling the task that is set him.

In writing about the season's racing, I only referred casually to the French turf, which, in these days, when horses not infrequently cross the Channel, has an interest for those of us who go racing in England. The now three-year-olds in France

LUCIE

are extremely moderate, and it is generally agreed that Lucie, whose picture is here given, was unquestionably the best of the two-year-olds : whether she retains her form has to be proved. We know precisely what this daughter of Melton and Livie II. is, or, at any rate, what she was last June. At Ascot she finished third for the Coventry Stakes to Democrat and Vain Duchess, beaten a length and a neck from the winner, with Diamond Jubilee, who would not gallop that day, fourth, and Bourne Bridge, Chevening, Stealaway, and three others behind her. She carried a pound overweight and was practically much the

same animal as Vain Duchess. This latter filly, according to the Free Handicap, is some way—19 lbs.—from the best of her year; so that the French three-year-olds certainly do not look a brilliant lot. For several seasons past in England the colts have been distinctly better than the fillies; a few years since, in the days of Signorina, the reverse was the case, and we saw in the St. Leger what happened when Seabreeze, Memoir, and La Flèche met the colts, not to include Throstle, whose success may have been something in the nature of a fluke, and, indeed, assuredly was so, unless Porter had made an incredible mistake with regard to her and Matchbox. In France, however, Lucie was set down as a good many pounds in front of anything else of her year.

Relations between the two countries are so strained at present that, unless things improve, the growing disposition to send English horses to run in France, and the reverse, is likely to be checked, which is a pity in the interests of sport, particularly as, to take a selfish view of the case, under existing circumstances an English horse would next year appear to have a chance of carrying off the Grand Prix, and breaking the long string of bad luck which we have experienced since Minting won in 1886. Up to and including that year, English horses had won twelve times, and French eleven. But since then, near as we have occasionally been, the French have thirteen consecutive successes to their credit; and of their Grand Prix winners Ténébreuse and Vasistas have been sent over and won on our courses.

Racing around Paris is certainly very comfortably and conveniently arranged. To reach Longchamps or Auteuil one has a pleasant drive along the Champs Elysées and through the Bois de Boulogne. There are a few reserve seats for Government and other officials, but nearly the whole of the stands are open to visitors on payment of a louis for a man's pass and ten francs for a lady, race cards being gratuitously presented at several meetings, and very convenient race cards moreover, giving as they do the pedigrees of the runners and other information. There is abundance of room, except on the occasion of one or two of the principal events, and if people find speculation amusing, they know they will be fairly treated at the Mutuels, where they can bet from half a louis—on the other side of the course from five francs—upwards. There are

myriads of halfpenny sporting papers, several of which summarise the opinions of the journalistic tipsters; thus, one reads that such and such a horse is given twenty-one times, another seventeen fewer, a third eight, and so on.

For the stranger who knows nothing of the form, a good way is to note the horses that are mostly recommended, to have a look at them, pick the one he likes best, and stake accordingly. When there are four starters a horse can be backed for a place, that is to say, 1, 2; and it not seldom happens that the odds for a place are longer than the odds to win—an extraordinary state of affairs calculated to stagger the English bookmaker. Favourites seem to win in France in much the same proportion as in England, and one can generally come near to ascertaining what is the favourite by strolling past the various Mutuels, and observing which numbers are chiefly taken. The drive to Vincennes is for a long way through the streets until you reach the Bois; it only takes some forty-five minutes; Longchamps and Auteuil can be reached in about a quarter of an hour less. Enghein is a little farther than Vincennes, through an uninteresting route, though there are some picturesque bits near the course. Colombes, in a different direction, is also a drive of only forty-five minutes or so. Maisons Laffitte is farther, but an excellent course when reached; and during the greater part of the year there is racing at one or other of these places almost every day.

Elsewhere in this number I have criticised the handicappers, but one thing must emphatically be said in favour of the great majority of them, and assuredly of Mr. R. K. Mainwaring: they diligently do their level best without fear or favour, and without the vaguest shadow of suspicion as to their absolute integrity. When men are mixed up with various stables—owners, intimate friends of owners, and trainers—and know precisely what horses are, blunders more or less gross in the adjustment of the weights are of course obvious, and, when often repeated, do assuredly become exasperating. Handicappers who go strictly on book form must necessarily make the most serious mistakes, because some horses are trying to win, and others are running with the intention of winning on some future occasion, when they have got so far down in a handicap that they have a considerable amount of weight in hand. No one can tell these things from

MR. R. K. MAINWARING

the book; and one great fault with handicappers is to penalise animals that run second and third on sufferance, whilst others that could easily have beaten everything but the winner, and possibly sometimes could have beaten him too if it had been desired, are liberally reduced. Not enough attention is paid to the notorious policy of certain owners: in fact, men ought to be handicapped as well as horses. The subject is far too elaborate for discussion in a Note, and these comments have been suggested by the fact that this sketch of Mr. Mainwaring, done by a young amateur—Mr. O. H. Birley—who seems to me to have been singularly successful, has come into my possession. Mr. Mainwaring's work is frequently worthy of all possible respect in the *performance*, and is invariably so—I cannot say this too emphatically—in the *intention*.

The death of poor Jewitt reminds me of a story which I always thought extremely funny. Men are, of course, accustomed to apply phrases familiar to them in the course of their profession to the ordinary events of life, and the result is frequently quaint. A good many years ago Jewitt was engaged to a girl who had not been strictly truthful in the matter of *Anno Domini;* the engagement was broken off, and Jewitt was confiding details of the matter to a friend and adviser who took a great interest in him. He explained the cause of the rupture, and went on to add: 'Besides, you know, sir, she was really twenty-seven, and she told me she was only twenty-two. That was giving her wrong age, and she might have been disqualified for that, mightn't she?' A remark of Mornington Cannon's also comes into my head. His uncle Joseph, the popular and expert trainer, is an excellent all-round sportsman, a very good cricketer amongst other things. He was batting once in a match at Chevely, took his guard with great care and deliberation, prepared to do mighty deeds, but was unfortunately bowled first ball. This was a blow; but he resolved to make up for the disaster in his second innings. Again he went to the wicket, eager to retrieve the mishap. The first ball came down and carried away his middle stump. His nephew was watching the performance. 'Form quite correct!' was his quiet comment, as the defeated batsman disconsolately strolled away.

The manuscript of a book called 'Pinkand Scarlet,' by Lt.-Col. Alderson, chanced to come into my hands a few days ago. It

is the work of a singularly accomplished horseman and a keenly observant soldier, and the nature of it will be guessed by the well-chosen title : it contrasts the hunting-field with the battle-field, showing, amongst other things, how the lessons of the former may be applied to the latter ; and I was so much struck with the work that I have begged permission to extract material for a couple of articles, the first of which will be found elsewhere in this number. The publisher, who will presently issue the volume, asked me not to take 'all the cream,' and I have by no means done so. 'Pink and Scarlet,' when sent out in book form, will, indeed, be found equally good throughout, and I expect that what I have selected will induce readers to make acquaintance with the work as a whole.

* * *

Of course it is, unhappily, impossible to *kill* every bird at which one fires, I mean to kill it dead on the spot ; but I am afraid that all young sportsmen—and a sportsman may be young at any age : I refer to the novice at sport—by no means realise the enormous difference, from a purely sporting point of view, between crumpling up a bird high in the air so that he falls heavily and lies absolutely motionless, and in getting a few stray pellets into it anywhere, and gathering it, a long way off, later on. I was looking the other day again at the admirable chapter on the subject, written by Mr. A. Stuart-Wortley in the Pheasant book of the 'Fur, Feather, and Fin' series—a volume I am proud to have edited—and every one who shoots may be cordially recommended to read what Mr. Stuart-Wortley there says : '"I rather think you will find a dead bird in that wood," is the sort of remark one constantly hears gunners of a certain class make to a keeper at the end of a beat ; "and I fancy one fell behind the hedge over there. I hit that hen very hard, but she went on—no, I don't mean the one with her leg down, though we ought to get her. There's another by that tree, and oh ! the dog's after that cock—he's running." The "one by the tree" is down, and is kicking hard till a clumsy beater slays him with a stick ; but all these birds, very probably, ought to have been killed clean, while several that are dead have gradually fluttered to the ground and had a good kick before they died or were put an end to. If the gunner in question, who blazed away at everything that came very near him low down, complacently says that he "got" so many, and is content with the "getting," there is no hope for him ; if he recognises the

fact that the man next to him, who made a smaller contribution to the total, but took only sporting shots and killed every bird *dead*, did infinitely better work, he may in the time become a creditable shot.'

With reference to the 'lob' or 'cob' question, discussed in the November number—arising from Mr. W. J. Ford's studies of various editions of 'Tom Brown's Schooldays'—'W. C. G.' kindly writes: 'Dear Rapier,—I can vouch for "lob" at Eton in 1843; "cob" unknown. Also at Rugby (I being a Master) "lob" was the word, not, as far as I know, "cob," from 1871 onwards. But schoolboy terms vary much with schools, and even for the same school at different times. The reading in the original edition, when ascertained, will not prove "cobs" to have been meant by Tom Hughes, even though printed. What you want most is to get a *Rugby* man of T. H.'s standing to say which was the word used then. There is still living (I believe) at Northfield House, Rugby, D. Buchanan, Esq. He is four years senior to me, and a Rugbeian. He, a veteran cricketer, could give you an opinion. Misprints hold their place marvellously. Here is a case in point. Not long after the appearance of the "Heathen Chinee," I was told when talking over it with another that "In his sleeve, which was large, there were twenty-four *packs*" was a misprint of *packs* for *jacks* = knaves. Obviously in euchre the "right and left bower" are knaves or jacks; and these twenty-four cards would be easier to conceal than twenty-four "packs," and more handy. But I do not vouch for Bret Harte having written "jacks." I have seen it invariably printed "packs." If it was a mistake, there it has stuck!'

The Badminton Magazine

PINK AND SCARLET; OR, HUNTING AS A SCHOOL FOR SOLDIERING

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL E. A. H. ALDERSON

MOVING off from the rendezvous! This is apt to set the human heart beating above normal, both in the 'Image of war without its guilt,' and in the Real thing; and in the former it certainly has this effect on the equine heart. The result often is that the owner 'gets his dander up,' as Mr. Jorrocks says, and plays about in a way by no means comfortable to a bad or nervous rider.

How to suppress, or rather keep within bounds, these expressions of the exuberance of equine spirits? Talk to him and give him a chuck or two under his chin, or, better still, move off with the hounds and keep him close behind them. This will please him, give him something to look at and think about, and make him forget his desire to 'play up.' It will also take you out of the crowd, particularly of the carriages, foot-people, and, it must be added nowadays, cyclists. It is far better to be well ahead of all these when on a fresh and eager horse who *will* sidle down the road.

We are nearing the covert. Are we going into it, or going to take our chance outside? If the Master does not object, much better go in, unless the covert is a very small one or has no rides. This advice is given in spite of the fact that one of the oldest (but certainly not the best) huntsmen in England at the present day said, 'Inside the covert is no place for gentlemen: they get in the way and kick the hounds.' But there was a reason for this. He had just been surprised behind a big tree taking a long pull at his 'jumping powder,' and wasn't pleased.

On the other hand, Beckford says, speaking of the field, 'Could you entice them all into the cover, your sport, in all probability, would not be the worse for it.'

Let us, however, consider the question impartially. We came out to hunt, and to see and learn all we can of and from the 'Sport of Kings.' Not the least good part, from both points of view, is to see a fox well found. This we shall not do if we stay outside the covert. Nor shall we even *hear* much of it, for probably two-thirds of our fellow-'sportsmen' who will be there will be engaged in telling each other the last good story, the last scandal, or who won at yesterday's steeplechases, &c. &c., and in doing this they will keep up an incessant cackle resembling that made by the inhabitants of a roused farmyard. This noise, which we can always listen to in the smoking-room of the club when we wish, will effectually prevent us from hearing for ourselves when hounds are drawing up to their fox.

Not having heard anything, and therefore having no ideas of our own as to what is likely to happen, we shall become like one of the flock of sheep that hunting fields so much resemble. Thus, our minds being vacant, as far as regards the thing we have come out and gone to considerable trouble and expense to do, we shall be ready to receive any impression, and we shall helplessly join the mad, and, as far as most of us are concerned, blind rush, which will take place when some one calls out, 'By Jove! they're gone away!' when a pink coat is seen disappearing round a distant corner at a gallop, or when a boy scaring rooks in a field hard by gives vent to an unusually loud 'Cow-waw!'

Will such a state of mind give us any satisfaction in this part of the Image, or will it favour the learning of lessons for the Real?

Certainly not. Therefore let us see that we do not get into it; and if, by request of the Master or for some other good reason, we do go outside the covert, let us remember the excel-

'COW-WAW!'

lent advice given in the course of 'Some Rules of Advice as Concerns Hunting'; and, 'not talk, not laugh, and, above all, not whistle.' We shall then hear if a hound challenges, hear when they turn, and hear when they go away. This is attending to business, 'playing the game' in fact—the other is coffee-housing * * *

As we mean to go into the covert if we can, let us think what it behoves us to do when there. We must keep well behind the huntsman, say fifty yards; must stand still when he stands still; must make way at once for him, and any hounds which may be round his horse, should he turn round and wish to pass us; must carefully avoid letting our horse (unless we can trust him absolutely not to kick them) be heels towards any hounds which may come near us; and, above all, we must keep quiet.

So much for the etiquette of the chase. What can we think about the covert as regards the business of war?

Its rides: are they sound or not? Wide enough to take infantry in fours or cavalry in sections? Is the undergrowth penetrable or not? If so, by infantry only or by cavalry also? The trees: are they thick and big enough to stop a bullet?[1] Suppose we had to defend or to watch the far edge, how should we do it? Would our supports receive any cover from rifle or shell fire if placed a little way back from the edge?

The covert we are now drawing does not look much like holding a fox, it is so hollow and there is no lying for him. Ah! there is a young hound running a rabbit: we may venture to smack our whip and rate him with a 'Ware rabbit!' and follow this with a 'Garaway boick!' if there is no hunt servant near by to do it.

It's no go this time, for there is the huntsman blowing them out with that 'Come, come, come, come-away!' note on the horn, to which the whip is maintaining with 'Cor-way-coup, coup! coup! cor-w-a-y!' or 'Heeawoy—heea-w-o-y!'

On we go at a jogtrot to the next covert, Foxey Wood, which we made out in the distance when riding to the Meet. A jump on the way? No—certainly not, unless it is necessary, for we may break a fence, or jump into crops, for nothing; besides, we never know when we may want a jump out of our horse.

This covert looks more likely—plenty of warm lying, and

[1] It takes 42 inches of soft wood such as fir, &c., and 24 inches of hard wood such as oak, to stop a Lee-Metford bullet at 500 yards.

ups and downs of ground with sunny banks and lee sides to any wind. Rabbits too in plenty, judging by the amount of 'work.' How eagerly the hounds dash in at the cheery 'Yoi-over there, yoi-over!' of the huntsman, and—but Somerville describes it a thousand times better than we can :

> . . . See! how they range
> Dispers'd, how busily this way and that
> They cross, examining with curious nose
> Each likely haunt.

Who that is a sportsman can help seeing it all in his mind's eye as he reads these lines? Does he not feel in his nostrils the delightful (to a fox hunter at any rate) smell of the freshly fallen leaves on the damp earth? Can he not see the cheerily waving, and almost speaking (by their expression) 'sterns,' flashing about in the bracken and the brambles, and perhaps tipping themselves with red as they do so? Can he not hear the long-drawn 'Yooi ov-er there,' and the 'Yeu try in thar,' of the huntsman, encouraging the owners of the expressive sterns to find their fox?

Hold hard! or enthusiasm for the Image will override that for the Real. What a comfortable bivouac might be formed on the heather-covered ground under those pines, whose lower branches would be excellent for making shelters. What—No! enough of this for the present, for surely those hounds are showing a line across the ride about a hundred yards up?

Ah! there's a whimper. Now a challenge. The huntsman sits silent and still. Again Somerville bests us in description.

> . . . Hark! on the drag I hear
> Their doubtful notes, preluding to a cry
> More nobly full, and swelled with every mouth. o o o

Ah! there he goes over the ride just in front of us, a jolly-looking, bright coated fellow, too. Now we may open our mouths and holloa 'Taa-leo over!' if we like, and if there is no hunt servant near by to do it.

The pack come crashing after him; we must keep touch with them now as closely as if they were our own or the enemy's scouts, or they may give us the slip.

One ring round the covert. Then from the distant corner comes the shrill 'wh-ooi!' of the whip, followed by the magic 'Gone awa-way, gone a-w-a-w-a-y! -GONE AWA-W-O-Y!'

Glorious sound! at which the funkers pale, and the 'right sort' glow as they do at the sound of battle.

'COFFEE-HOUSING

There goes the huntsman, swishing through the undergrowth to the point.

'Twang-twang, twang-twang, twang-twang!' goes his horn with that double note which tells the flying pack that the varmint has gone * * *

Gone away-o-y!

The piquets are in!

What is the first thing necessary in both cases?' 'Decision!

And the second? Action!

One is no good without the other, and without either we are lost. Surely he who learns to cultivate both at his play is more than likely to be able to apply them when he wants them in his work?

Our business just now is to get a start in the Image, as it would be to take the initiative in the Real.

We must decide on the instant what is the best way to do it. To join the desperately excited, jostling, 'look-outing' and mad scattering crowd, which is tearing down the ride like a flock of frightened sheep charging for a gap, and which, like the sheep in the gap, must inevitably become jammed in the gateway at the end of it? Or to follow the fast disappearing huntsman through the still quivering scrub, which has already closed up again behind him, and in so doing scratch our hats, and our boots, and perhaps our faces, green our coats, and maybe stub our horses? * * *

Crowds, both in the Image and the Real, mean casualties. Nothing can be seen or heard in a noisy crowd, as this one will be. To get out of the crowd is therefore the first essential if we are really to enjoy the chase, as it is also if we are to succeed in the battle of life. So let us, in this case only, for when outside the covert we must take our own line, follow the huntsman, even at the risk of stubbing our horses. The damaged clothes and the scratched face don't count.

What! risk laming a horse for the chance of getting a start? Yes, certainly. For though we should at all times treat our horse as if he were the apple of our eye, yet there will be times, both in sport and in war, when we must ride him as if he wasn't worth eighteenpence.

Now, this getting a start, this taking of the initiative, is one of these times. It is then that in the Image we must, if necessary, jump at short notice an extra forbidding-looking fence or an awkward stile, and in the Real that we must be prepared to take some risks in order that we may strike quickly,

remembering, as Whyte-Melville says, that 'the first blow is half the battle in many nobler struggles than a street-brawl with a cad.' Having got a start we can afford to look about us and pick our places a bit.

It is not proposed to write a run, or to explain how it should be ridden: Whyte-Melville has done it so deliciously in Chapter XI. of 'Riding Recollections' that it would be both superfluous and presumptuous to attempt to do so here. We may, however, scan what he has written with a view to seeing where lessons for soldiering can be deduced.

The first point he draws attention to is the necessity of *keeping the eyes open*—of observation, in fact. How essential this habit is for soldiering has already been pointed out, and there is no need to say more.

Having got a good start, 'do not therefore lose your head,' says Whyte-Melville. There is no doubt that the sight of a pack of foxhounds dashing across the first field or two, with that 'drive' which is their characteristic, sets the blood coursing through one's body as do the first shots of battle. Here, then, is education indeed, for he who keeps his head under the one circumstance will probably do so under the other.

Whyte-Melville says, 'ride for ground as far as possible when the foothold is good.' Proper use of ground is daily becoming of more importance to the soldier, who, whether he belong to the horse, foot, or artillery, will only lead his men like sheep to the slaughter if he does not know how to use ground, and cannot make up his mind quickly which is the best way to do so.

In riding to hounds during a 'quick thing' a man has but little time to make up his mind, the *pros* and *cons* of over or round the hill?—down the furrow, or turn off and strike the headland?—into the meadow and jump two fences, or keep along the stubble and jump only one?—across the bottom or round the head of it?—&c. &c.—all have to be decided in less time than it takes to read this paragraph * * *

Sir Redvers Buller told us at the manœuvres of 1896 that officers did not think sufficiently about the use of ground. Let us, therefore, all hunt as much as we can and learn to think of ground in the pleasantest possible way! * * *

The author of 'Riding Recollections' writes of an old friend of his that 'he always rode as if he had never seen a run before, and should never see one again,' and he adds that this is something of the feeling that those who ride to hounds should

'LET US FOLLOW THE HUNTSMAN'

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possess, a feeling which impels them to take every legitimate advantage and to throw no possible chance away.

Analysed, this means, 'Always play the game.'

How many runs have been missed because people will talk at the wrong time; because they will not take the trouble to keep touch with the hounds in a big wood; because they will not get up early enough to be in time at the meet; because on a bad scenting day they will let hounds get so far ahead of them that when the scent suddenly improves they do not know which way they have gone! These are only a few instances of the bad results of not 'playing the game.'

We need not search very deeply into our military history to find plenty of instances of disasters which were due solely and simply to this same slackness, this same contempt of the enemy. Zululand, the Soudan, South Africa, and India all furnish examples, but it would perhaps be better taste not to name them.

Therefore let us soldier as we would ride to hounds, and give no 'chances;' taking no notice when the slack ones say of us in the Real—as they assuredly will do—'What unnecessary precautions! why, there's no enemy within twenty miles,' or, 'What a devil of a funk this chap is in! What's the good of bothering the men so?' &c. &c. Just as they will say of us in the Image, 'What a jealous riding chap that is!' or, 'How unnecessarily he buckets his horse!' &c. &c.

It's no good, either in soldiering or in sport, any more than it is in life in general, trying to please every one, and the only safe thing to do is always to *play the game* * * *

How can we anticipate checks either in sport or in war? Whyte-Melville tells us one and the most important way when he says, 'Keep an eye forward.'

Facey Romford tells us another way when he says, 'Francis Romford, if you were the fox what would you do under these circumstances?' We can equally well say, 'If I was the enemy what should I do?' * * *

What to do to pick up the line—to set the concern going again—in the Image and the Real?

In the former very little indeed, for, unless you are hunting the hounds yourself, you have merely a passive part to play. Turn your horse's head to the wind and sit still is all that is required of you * * *

If only all hunting fields would do this when hounds throw up their heads, how very many more foxes would come to hand!

Instead of doing it, however, they *will* move about after the

huntsman making his cast, probably talking, and even 'whistling,' all the time. The result being that hounds and huntsman have the uneasy feeling of being pressed on; the steam and smell of the horses, not to mention that of the riders, which must be very perceptible to the fine nose of the hound, is ever with them, and should a back cast be necessary the ground is all fouled.

Why will people spoil their own sport?

Because many are ignorant that they are doing so, some are jealous of the others, and nearly all are like sheep and move on because other people do so. Let us not be like any of these, but let us remember that the thing for the field to do at a check is to *keep still.*

With the huntsman, however, as with the commander in the Real, a check is the most anxious time. He must be all eyes and ears, keep his head cool, and, while the hounds are making their own cast (in the Real while the men in little knots are holding on to some bit of cover), rapidly turn the situation over in his mind.

How far did they bring it? What headed him? In which direction was his old point? What is his new one? Is he running short because he is nearly beat? &c. * * *

Ah! they have hit it off in the corner there, and up go the heads and down go the sterns once more, and away they go in the uncontrolled ecstasy of pursuit.

The check has let up the laggards and those who did not get a start, the latter rather cross and determined to see the rest of it, if riding can make them do so; so if we mean to keep our places, we must 'tackle to work with a will.' * * *

Even here we find that the Image will dovetail in with the Real; for is not the huntsman, with his double anxiety to show sport and kill his fox, like the general who wishes to win his battle, and at the same time keep his casualties down? and do not the reputations of both fluctuate with their successes or reverses?

Away we go after the merrily chirping pack, thanking our stars that the check has not been serious, and facing, with that exhilarated feeling which Kinglake has called 'the will of a horseman to overcome or elude all obstacles,' the unknown at each fence. Here again is education, for in modern war we must face the unknown with a vengeance, and who is likely to do it better than he who does it many times a day merely for his sport? * * *

Ah! that very green look about the centre of the field we

have just jumped into probably means bog, and we must look out that our horse does not drop his hind legs into one of the herring-bone drains as we gallop over them, for this will mean a nasty fall and perhaps a broken back for our mount. Judging by its situation and surroundings, this innocent-looking stake and bound fence we are just coming to probably has a big ditch on the other side, and we must put on the pace a bit.

Yes! just as we thought; and we only get over with a scramble. Let us take this ridge and furrow slantways, and it won't interfere so much with our horse's stride; besides, the best way out appears to be in the corner of the field, but we must go steady, as there seems to be a bit of a drop. How cleverly the horse let himself down! but, in spite of this, we instinctively feel that he does not relish jumping as he did an hour ago.

By Jove, rails ahead! and pretty stiff-looking ones too. Ah! that's our place where the top bar is half broken through, but they are none too nice even there, and we must not go at them too fast. Well done, old horse, but a good job it broke! Now we can ease him a bit up the headland: luckily the gate at the end is open, for the fence has wire on it.

These are only a few specimens of the details which must be noticed and the precautions which must be taken if we would get successfully to the end of a run, and yards might be written in the same strain; but we shall get to the bottom both of the horse and of the reader's patience; besides, the best of runs, like the fiercest of battles, must have an ending, and the end of ours is near. Enough has, however, been said to show how, even when crossing the last few fields in a run, the rider to hounds must ever be exercising or unconsciously acquiring those faculties which cannot but stand him in good stead in war, —the foreseeing of obstacles, and the seeing or devising of means to overcome them.

As we burst through a thick bullfinch we catch a view of the fox rolling across the next field with a pack close at his brush.

We are up to the enemy's position.

How they strain after him! How they gain on him!

Ah!

> Who-whoop! they have him, they're round him; how
> They worry him when he's down!
> 'Twas a stout hill fox when they found him, now
> It's a hundred tatters of brown!

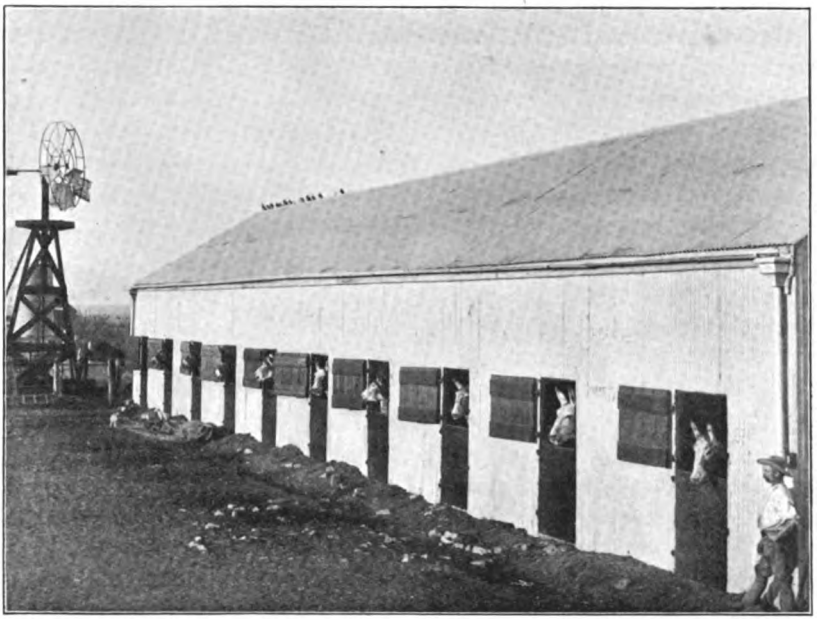
LIFE ON A RANCHE IN THE ORANGE FREE STATE

BY STUART CRAIG

So much attention is naturally directed to the Orange Free State at the present time that an Englishman's experience of life on a ranche in that (ex ?) Republic will, I hope, be of interest to readers of the BADMINTON MAGAZINE, especially as it is scarcely going too far to regard it now as practically British territory.

In spite of the Orange Free State being called 'The Land of Sunshine and no Rain,' it compares very favourably with other countries as regards stock raising, both in cattle and horses, and my four years' residence on a large mule and horse breeding ranche allows me to discuss the subject of life in the State with, I hope, some authority. The ranche that I was on was situated on the northern border, some thirty miles from the Vaal River, the stream which divides the Transvaal Republic from her sister State, and was 30,000 acres in extent. The accompanying picture shows the stud stables, where the imported Spanish jackasses were kept : the stables were built of corrugated zinc and wood, which is typical of South Africa, and at the entrance will be seen the windmill which supplied water for both animals and household purposes. I may mention here that the former owner of the farm (a Boer) had lived there for

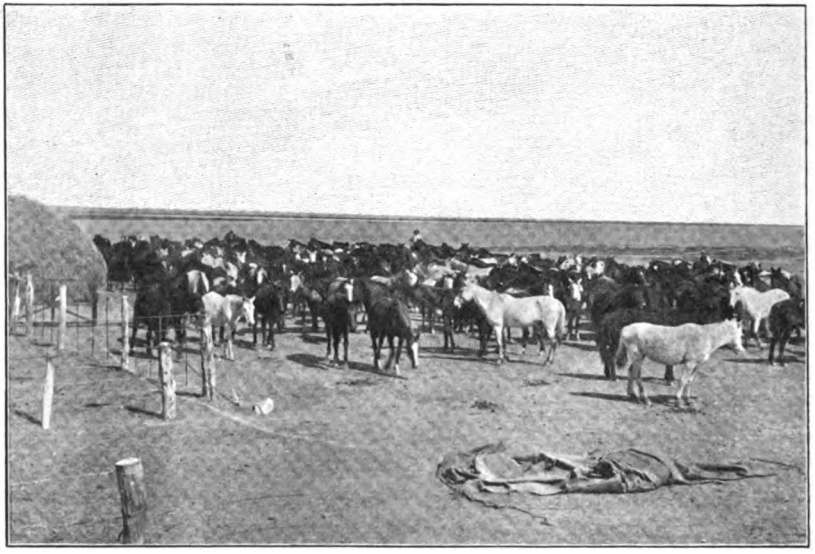
twenty years without ever attempting to sink a well, and in the dry season was obliged to fetch his water from a creek, at some distance from the house, which in the dry season was absolutely green and thick. He, of course, laughed at the mad Englishmen who were anxious to sink a well near the stables and were confident of finding water pretty close to the surface ; but after going down thirty feet we struck a spring, and, so as to make sure of the supply, sank some seven feet deeper ; the result being that we were well supplied with good water all the year round, a thing invaluable to the stud.



THE STUD STABLES

There were five hundred head of breeding mares on the ranche, all of them quite unbroken. The average price of these was £5 per head, the usual amount in the Orange Free State for such animals, as they are very seldom used for riding or driving purposes ; for no Boer would ever think of riding a mare, it being considered very *infra dig.*, although myself I prefer them to horses, as they are generally more hardy ; in fact, the very best animal I ever rode in the country was a mare which cost £5 ! Of course Englishmen in Johannesburg and other towns will buy a good mare just as readily as they will a horse.

Another picture, which was taken just at sunrise, gives a fair idea of the veldt and the driving in of a mob of mares to the stockyards, or kraals as they are termed in South Africa. During the breeding season we were up at daybreak, and after a cup of coffee (a great institution in the country) we would saddle up our ponies, and set off to one of the paddocks to collect a mob of mares to be brought to the kraals for branding and drafting out, &c. If the mob was a large one, comprising two or three hundred head, we would have two or three 'boys,' as the natives are called, and a couple of white men; we would ride off in different directions, gradually collect all the stock in a corner of



KRAALING A HERD OF BREEDING MARES

the paddock, and then proceed to drive them down in one large mob to the kraals, one white man riding in front to steady them, a boy mounted on each flank to prevent any from breaking away, and another white man riding at the rear, keeping the sluggards going by the aid of his stock-whip. In this manner we were able to run them in without much galloping about. By the time they were all safely kraaled we were more than ready for our breakfast, after which we parted out those that were to be dealt with on that morning, and let the remainder run into the paddock again. Those that had been parted out were run into the lassoing kraal, which was almost square, with stone walls six feet high and with blind doors.

They were then lassoed in the following manner. The man who was throwing would stand in the centre of the kraal, and, swinging the noose around his head, would fling it out as the mare he was desirous of roping galloped past. The noose would drop over the animal's head, and by the means of a quick jerk from the wrist would become taut round the windpipe. If the mare was to be thrown on to her back for branding, one of us would get another rope round both her fore legs, and at a given moment the man with the lasso would pull her head and neck one way, while we pulled her legs the other. Down she would go! Immediately she fell we would be on to her head, and lifting her nose from off the ground and sitting on her neck, could prevent her from rising. Of course it was all done in a few minutes, and the smarter one was the less likelihood was there of being hurt in any way. The brands were kept red hot just outside the kraal door, so that we were not delayed a moment. On one occasion we branded as many as one hundred and twenty-five full-grown mares between 4.30 A.M. and 12 o'clock midday—a fair morning's work, considering that the mares were all fat and strong, and had never been touched before with rope or halter. Of course a certain amount of risk attached to this kind of work, but that makes the life so enjoyable to a strong and hearty man. Some of the horses were very vicious, and took the opportunity of 'letting out' at you if you happened to go too near them at all incautiously.

The yearly mustering, branding, and weaning of the young stock was always a 'big order,' as all the yearlings had to be parted out from their mothers and entered up in the stock book, then branded and drafted out into different paddocks. The yearling mules generally gave us some fun, being by nature more vicious and stubborn than the horse-bolts, and as soon as they felt the lasso round their necks would scream and plunge in vain endeavour to extricate themselves, often charging head first at the wall in their blind rage. I once had the bad luck to get in the way of one of them when lassoing, and as a reward received his two hind feet in the middle of my body. There are reasons why you cannot objurgate the animal or otherwise express your feelings—you have no wind. A mule seems to take a delight in kicking. Even when standing together in a kraal mules will kick incessantly at one another for the mere pleasure of the thing, as it were.

Another picture shows a small herd of mules in the lassoing kraal, awaiting branding. One very extraordinary feature of a

mule is its fondness for a horse mare. When we weaned the young mules we used to turn an old tame mare out into the paddock with them, and after a couple of days they would never leave her, always feeding close round her. When taken away I have known them to get out of the camp they were in and travel across country as much as a hundred miles in order to get back to their beloved old friend; so that if we wanted to run a mob of mules out of the paddock to the kraals, all we had to do was to get the mare out, and the mules would gallop after like a flock of sheep.

As most people are aware, there are no natural fences or hedgerows in the Orange Free State, it being absolutely open country; and five years ago very few of the farmers had troubled to erect

YEARLING MULES IN KRAAL AWAITING BRANDING

fences round their properties, as nearly all their stock was bred on their own farms, and would never stray very far away from the 'run'; but as all our stock had been purchased from different farmers in all parts of the State, it was absolutely necessary for us to fence in the ranche with all possible speed. This we did. After having erected a plain wire fence, consisting of six wires of No. 8, and hardwood poles round the boundary, we put up division fences of like material, dividing the property into five large paddocks. In all we had thirty-six miles of fencing on the place. We were greatly troubled at first by the deer or bles-bôk breaking the fences in endeavouring to jump them, in order to get back to their old camping-grounds. We found several with their necks broken, having failed to clear the jump; but they soon settled down and seldom changed their paddocks after the first season.

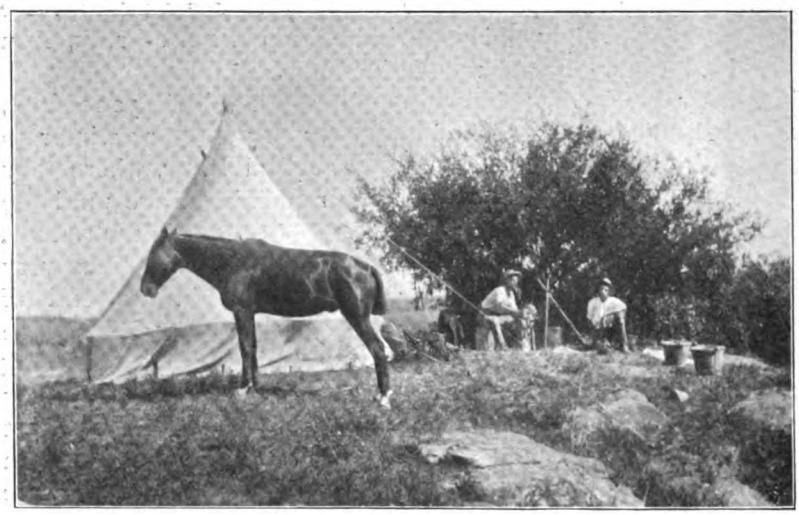
Another calamity one has to guard against is a camp fire. As soon as the first frost falls, generally towards the end of April, the grass becomes dried up and brown. If a match is dropped on to it, it immediately ignites, and in a few minutes is a roaring fire travelling at a terrific rate, sweeping everything before it, and leaving nothing but the burnt ground behind. In the early spring the farmers burn their camps, thus clearing off the old dry grass and enabling the young shoots to grow more quickly. The only way to guard against having your camps burnt out is to plough two furrows, about six yards apart, round each paddock, and burn off the grass in between the furrows, so that should one paddock get alight the fire will not extend to the adjoining one; although if the wind is very strong and the flames are high, they will sometimes jump the fire-break, even should it be more than six yards in width.

As our ranche was situated on the 'high veldt' (5000 feet), we were obliged to 'trêk' with all our horses every winter to the sandy soil on the low veldt at the Vaal River, where they would run on the old mealie-lands, remaining there until the spring rains had started the young grass on the home ranche. The past four seasons in the Orange Free State have been very late, and in 1897 we got our first rainfall in the end of December, instead of in September or October, and were obliged to camp at the Vaal River. Herding the stock during the daytime upon patches of green grass that had forced its way through in spite of the drought was harassing work, and we lost some sixty mule foals, on account of their mothers being in such poor condition and unable to give them sufficient milk; many of the mares also died through poverty. We were kept busy all day, lifting up those that had lain down and had not enough strength to get up of their own accord. I might explain here that 'trêking' always involved a lot of extra work and fatigue. The Vaal River camp was thirty miles from the homestead, and to drive a mob of 500 mares, with two-year-old mules, yearlings, and foals, was no easy business. We used to start at daybreak, and seldom reached our journey's end before late in the afternoon. For the first hour or so the horses would go as hard as they could. It took us all our time to keep them steady and prevent them from breaking away; but after they had settled down it was tiring work for the drivers, going at foot pace, and using the stock-whip continually to keep the tail end going. The accompanying photograph shows the writer and another man cooking a well-earned meal outside our tent

at the Vaal River after a day in the saddle. The horse is also enjoying his rest—fast asleep!

As no rain falls during the winter months in the Orange Free State it is necessary to water the crops of winter oats and barley by means of irrigation. Most of the farms have a natural spring on them, and by making a good dam one is able to raise splendid forage for stable-feeding; oats grown in this way always fetch a good price—viz., £2 per hundred bundles. Oat forage is bought by the hundred bundles, and a fair crop will give about a thousand bundles for one bag of oats sown.

There is a very great future before the country for agricul-

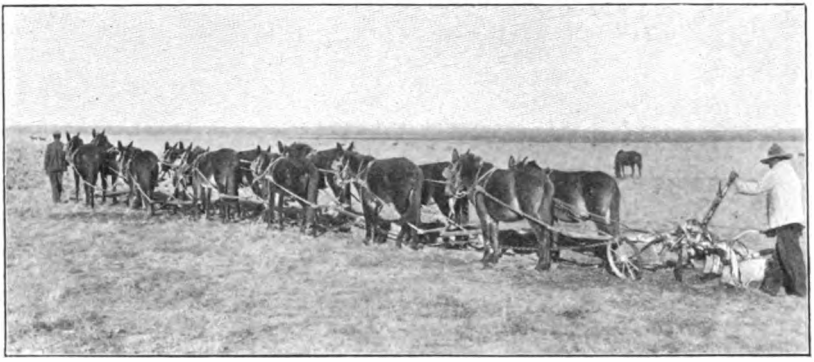


BREAKFAST IN CAMP ON THE BANKS OF THE VAAL

ture and stock raising, as up to the present little or nothing has been done by the Boers, the better class of whom consider it quite beneath their dignity to plough to any extent, and leave that work for their poorer neighbours, who, in their turn, are too lazy to sow more than will keep them in meal until the next season.

Another advantage of growing winter crops is that they are generally ripe for harvesting before the locusts make their appearance; these latter are one of the plagues of the country and during the past two seasons have cleared whole districts of the crops of mealies and Kaffir corn, eating them off to the level of the ground. It is almost impossible to guard against these

swarms, but if they lay their eggs on a block of ground which is under cultivation, one is able to drive the young ones away before they do much damage or are able to fly. We used to dig a large trench at one end of the land and drive the young locusts into it with small branches of trees, &c., and then bury them with the earth taken out of the trench. It was a very tedious task, as they would turn round and endeavour to hop past you as soon as they reached the trench; you had to wave your branch wildly to and fro in order to frighten them and keep them on the hop. We generally employed about fifty natives when doing work of this sort, paying them a shilling per head for the day. A swarm of locusts is always followed by a flock of birds, called locust birds—something like a large swallow, very swift on the wing. They dart in and out of the



A SOUTH AFRICAN PLOUGH TEAM

swarm as they fly, swallowing hundreds one after the other. A very peculiar feature of these birds is that, when resting on the veldt, they all have their heads and bodies turned in one direction. They never go singly; a flock comprises several thousands of them. A locust takes forty days to grow to full size and maturity. The Kaffirs are very fond of eating them, and a dish of them fried in fat is considered quite a delicacy.

All transport of goods to and from the ranche was done by mule teams, using twelve or fourteen in each waggon, coupled in pairs; all grain, &c., was also carried on these waggons, and we would load as much as 4000 bundles of oat forage on each. A tent at the end of the waggon is used by the Boers for sleeping in when transport-riding or trèkking with their stock.

So many articles were written about the rinderpest during its ravages in South Africa, that I will only just touch upon the subject. It was, indeed, a fearful plague, and many of the Boers declared was imported into the country by a certain well-known Englishman as the means of ruining the peaceful inhabitants! Cattle died off by the hundred, and the Boers had to work early and late in burying them, inoculating the others with Dr. Koch's remedy or with the blood taken from a cow or ox that had had the pest and survived it. They were able to save a large percentage by these methods, if done carefully and during the early stages of the disease. It was during this time that I

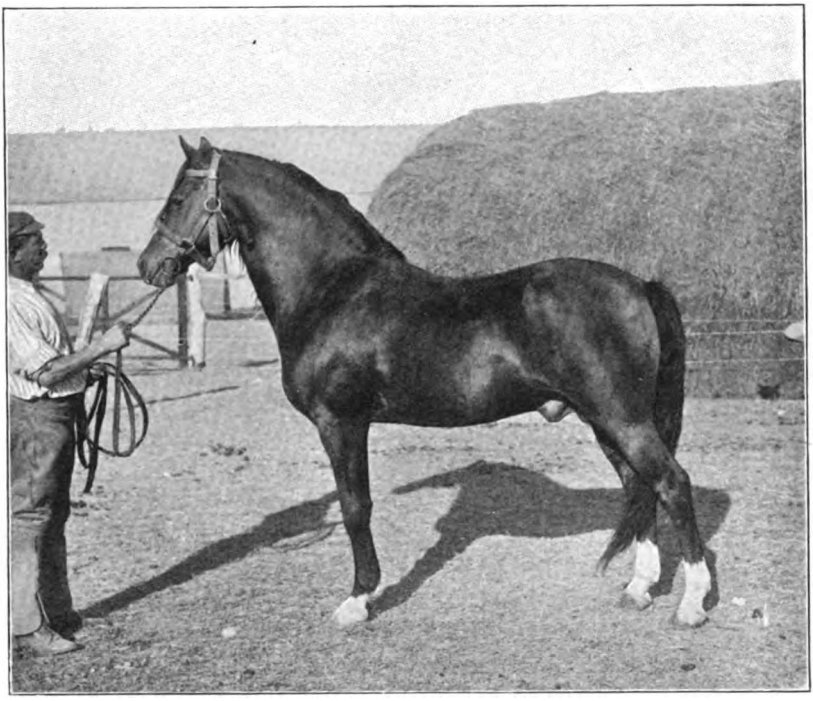
BRINGING A SPRING-BÔK HOME TO CAMP

saw more Boers with their jackets off than I had ever seen before or have since, hard work not being their forte. Fortunately we only had one span of oxen on the ranche when the plague broke out, and we managed to save all of them.

There is some good shooting to be had in some parts of the Free State, both birds, and 'running game' such as bles-bôk, spring-bôk, wilde-beeste, and stein-bôk. There were some hundreds of bles- and spring-bôk on the ranche, and I had many an enjoyable day's shooting. The bles-bôk is a fine large antelope—a full-grown ram weighing about 180 lbs. They are very hard to bring down, and I have known them to carry as many as five bullets in their fleshy parts before being brought to a standstill. The spring-

bôk is also a fair-sized animal, and is the most palatable of any game in South Africa. The accompanying illustration shows the way we used to carry a spring-bôk home on horseback.

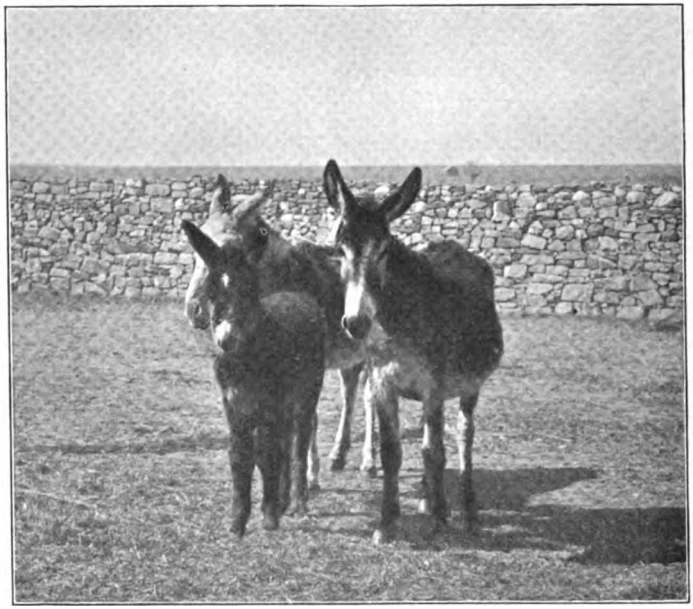
When first we settled on the ranche we were caused much annoyance by the poaching of the neighbouring Boers, who were continually shooting at our buck; but fortunately we managed to capture one of them and that was the means of checking the others. After returning from a long ride at sundown one day we heard several shots fired in one of our paddocks about two



A SOUTH AFRICAN STALLION

miles from the house, and guessed that some of our delightful neighbours were taking a pot-shot at the bles-bôk. The manager and myself saddled up two fresh horses and galloped off in the direction of the firing, and upon reaching the brow of a hill we espied a Dutchman, mounted, going full tilt after a wounded buck. He saw us and galloped off for all he was worth in the opposite direction. The manager and I then separated in the hope of being able to cut him off, as his horse was pretty nearly knocked up through chasing the wounded buck, and our animals were quite fresh. After riding hard for

some three miles his horse fell, and, being winded, absolutely refused to get up again. In another few minutes the manager had overtaken him, and, leaping off his horse, went for the Boer, who was a great rawboned man, standing six feet two inches, with a shock of red hair: he showed fight, and when I reached the spot was using his rifle as a club to keep off his assailant. As it was loaded it was anything but pleasant for the attacking party; but the British art of using the fists was too much for him, and he suddenly found himself prone on his back, with both eyes closed up by a well-directed blow from the manager.

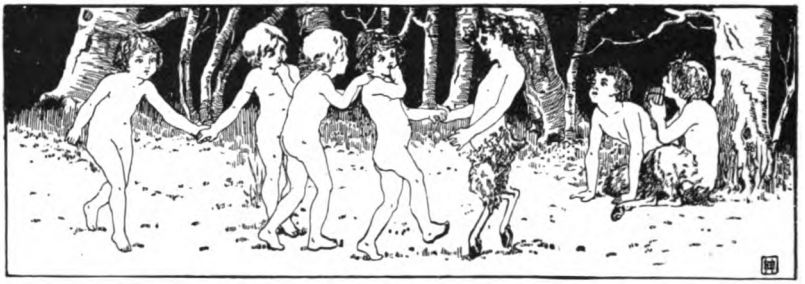


SPANISH JENNIES WITH SOUTH AFRICAN BRED FOAL

We then took his rifle and cartridges away from him, whereupon this gaunt individual went on to his knees and prayed to us to give him back his rifle: it was a Government gun and he would have to replace it out of his own pocket! But we were deaf to his entreaties, and left him, a sorry spectacle, minus rifle and ammunition. As he was a poor man it was useless to summon him, for the fine would have been £50, so we simply handed the rifle into the magistrate's office at the township, where he obtained it after a time by paying the sum of £5. It was a good lesson to the other Boers, who were in the habit of poaching on the ranche, as the facts of the

capture soon got abroad, and they had no desire to run the risk of being 'knocked out' by a Verdommed-Rooi-nek, as they term the Englishman.

The Boers as a race are not in the least sportsmen, but are fond of 'killing for killing's sake,' and only look upon a day's shooting as the means of replenishing their larders. Most of them carry a gun or rifle with them if driving to the township from their farms, and delight in potting at any game they may encounter on the way, the close season making very little difference to them should they need any fresh meat! The majority of them are good shots, and, as cartridges cost one shilling and tenpence for a packet of ten, they never fire a shot unless pretty sure of bagging their game.



FOOTBALL FEVER

BY CALDWELL LIPSETT

'WHAT! not up yet, you lazy beggar?' said Anderson, dashing open the bedroom door, and sitting down violently on the sleeper.

'When you've done, old man,' said Rorke, opening his eyes placidly, as the breath left his body with a squelch; 'that's my wind you are sitting on.'

'Are you aware that you are playing for the 'Varsity this afternoon? I suppose you've had your card? Here's Percy come to help to turn you out.'

As he spoke another man in flannels crossed the College quadrangle, climbed through the bedroom window, and took a seat on the top of the chest of drawers, saying:

'Half-past eight, and you ought to have been up half an hour ago! Pull him out of bed, George.'

'Oh, a little extra sleep doesn't do any one any harm,—recruits the exhausted energies. I make it a rule to do everything thoroughly while I'm about it.'

'Everything!' said Anderson scornfully. 'Why, ye gods! you do nothing at all. You're the slackest bounder I ever met at anything but sleeping and Rugby football.'

'Football!' exclaimed Rorke, answering to the word like a war-horse to the trumpet call. With a sudden jerk he arched his body from neck to heels like a bent bow, and shot his friend with a crash against the door of the room; then he leapt out of bed, stretching his arms abroad with a terrific yawn.

'Football!' he continued, his eyes kindling with enthusiasm, 'that's because it's a game worth playing. There's none other

like it. A year of ordinary life doesn't furnish half the excitement of one short fierce hour at Rugby. It is the best modern substitute for a good battle yet invented.'

'Oh yes,' said Percy Clare, laughing, 'we all know you're mad on the game. But I'm afraid your view of the case wouldn't exactly recommend it to the old ladies and coroners' juries that are always bleating about its dangers.'

'Danger!' replied the other with intense contempt, 'we haven't got enough danger in this effete modern life of ours to save us from falling into a race of milksops and mollycoddles. We are becoming so afraid to die, that we do not know how to live for thinking of it. Our games are the only preservatives of the backbone of our youth, of that Homeric blood-loving spirit which has been the glory of our adventurers in all ages from the knights of romance and the seamen of Drake to the pioneers of our Colonial Empire!'

Rorke immediately got his dumb-bells and began to use them with vigour. The other two sat and watched him with the sensuous satisfaction induced by the sight of perfect physical health and strength. He was the model of a young English athlete. About the middle height, with long back and arms, his shortness of limb came chiefly below the knee: he had the swelling biceps muscle, the rounded shoulders, and the slightly pigeon breast of a gymnast. As he stooped forward with the rhythmical movement of a pump the muscles of his calf gathered into a ball, the sinews of his thighs tightened and flattened, and a ripple ran down the brawn upon his back. Then, as he recovered himself and his breath went out while his arms shot up above his head, beneath his armpits his deep chest could be seen to contract, then fill again as he swooped downwards. The gleam of his skin filled the room with a shimmer as of creamy satin.

The other two men were also fine specimens of the young athlete in different styles. Anderson was a young giant over six feet, less solidly built than Rorke, but with an immense length of limb, and shoulders that jutted out on either side perfectly square with his neck: this peculiarity gave him an appearance of strength greater than he actually possessed. He was the centre three-quarter of the team. Clare was the wing sprinter. He was slim and more lightly built than the others; but, as he sat with his knees drawn up to his chin, the position showed the disproportionate length of bone from the hip to the knee-joint which proclaimed him to be a born runner. The

three friends were inseparable, and were commonly known as the Triplet.

After his bout with the dumbbells Rorke had a turn at the Indian clubs; then he got into his tub, and as he sat and splashed about there, pouring the chill water over his steaming flesh, he hummed to himself:

> For what's worth having must aye be bought,
> And sport's like life, and life's like sport,
> It ain't all skittles and beer.

As he was vigorously rubbing himself down, Anderson suddenly asked, continuing the line of thought suggested by the previous conversation:

'Are you going into the army, Reggie, when you go down?'

'Me? Not much,' replied the other disdainfully.

'Why? I thought that would be just the place for your combative instincts.'

'Well, that's just where you're wrong. You don't get enough fighting in the army nowadays; you only get discipline; and discipline's a thing I can't stand at any price. No, I tried the 'Varsity Volunteers when I was a young and enthusiastic fresher, and that was quite enough. I was unfortunate enough to have my tutor in the same company, and he started to lecture me one day. He told me that the University corps was the slackest in England, that Oxford was slacker than Cambridge, that our company was the slackest in Oxford, and that I was the slackest man in the company. So I cleared out. And never again, dear boy. No, whatever I go in for, it will be something that I can play for my own hand at. That's what I like about half at Rugger: whether your side's winning or losing you always have your individual chances.'

'You and your eternal Rugger,' groaned Clare, 'you make me sick of the very name! Are you coming out for this walk or are you not?'

That afternoon at three o'clock the Triplet were wending their way together down to the parks, followed by an admiring crowd of small boys discussing their points; Rorke's calves and Anderson's shoulders especially met with their approval.

Suddenly Rorke said to Anderson, 'Thank you, George, for getting me this chance. I know that it's you that have got me in.'

'Oh, nonsense,' replied Anderson, in confusion at this unexpected attack.

'It isn't nonsense,' replied the other warmly. 'You know as well as I do that heaps of better men than I have gone down from the 'Varsity without ever being tried. Football's like everything else in this life: it is largely a toss up who gets his chance, and still more a matter of influence. The 'Varsity team is merely a ring run by the recognised public schools; a school reputation is everything. The system *may* get the best men, but sometimes it does not. Whatever I may make of it, I should never have been tried only for your good word.'

'Oh,' said Anderson, laughing, 'I only told the skipper, as soon as I heard that Roberts was crocked, that if he didn't put you in at half, Percy and I would go out on strike first, and punch his head afterwards. But I don't suppose he minded that much.'

'I'll do as much for you another time, old man. It isn't that I lust after Blues and dignities of that kind. But I am so fond of the game for its own sake, that I'd have given my right hand for a chance like this. It is only with a good team against good men that you get a really good game, or an opportunity of learning it properly. And football's a game that you can't afford to waste the shining hours of your youth at. If you don't make a good start while you're young, you never make one at all.'

By this time they had reached the parks, where an immense crowd had assembled to see the 'Varsity play the famous Northern team of the Mohawks. When both parties appeared inside the ropes, a quarter of an hour late as usual, a great contrast was at once apparent between them. The eight 'Varsity forwards were all about six feet in height and thirteen stone weight, cleanly built and level as a pack of foxhounds. The Northern lot were shorter, heavier, and clumsier; they showed the fully developed frame and the brawny muscle of men accustomed from youth to wield the pick and the hammer. Both sides played four three-quarters.

The referee blew his whistle, and the game started. At once it became apparent that the enemy's forwards would have an advantage in the scrum during at least the earlier portion of the game, and that a heavy strain would be put on the 'Varsity backs. The captain's brow contracted as he reflected upon the new and untried man at half.

But Rorke on the football field was quite a different person from Rorke anywhere else. He concentrated all his energies in that single portion of his life. His lethargy was quite gone; his

pupils were dilated, and his nostrils aquiver with excitement. With his body bent double, and his hands at the end of his long arms trailing level with his ankles, he followed every motion of the ball through the scrimmage with the stealing step of a cat. There was a sudden rush, and a great Northern forward, a famous International, came through the middle with the ball at his toe. Rorke pounced on it head first, and the giant pitched sprawling over him. Again and yet again the Mohawks wheeled the scrum or broke through the middle: every time the halves saved like a flash. Rorke was playing desperately, and dashed himself down time after time at the feet of half a dozen forwards with a reckless abandonment that was absolutely regardless of consequences. But weight told, and steadily, foot by foot, yard by yard, the 'Varsity pack were forced back past the half-way line, past the quarter flag, down on to their own goal-line. Then with a sudden rush the Mohawks carried the whole scrimmage off their feet, and tumbled over the line in a confused mass, scoring the first try within ten minutes of the start.

'Most inartistic, but effective,' said the 'Varsity captain. 'We're not fit for them in the scrum, boys! once they get underneath us. Play as open a game as you can; get the ball and let it out at once.'

Within a minute of the re-start the 'Varsity front line got the ball and heeled it. Rorke's partner picked up and passed to him, Rorke ran to the opposite centre and transferred to Anderson, who took it with his speed already up. Holding the ball with his two hands lightly in front of him, in a moment Anderson was gliding down the centre of the field with the long stealthy step of a tiger; as he ran he glanced coolly from side to side, now over one shoulder now over the other: this and his length of limb disguised his pace; but really his huge stride covered the ground at an amazing speed. Feinting right and left, he dodged through a crowd of opponents. Two forwards made at him from either side: he gauged their position and rate of moving with his eye, slackened his pace slightly, then as he drew near them suddenly increased it, and shot between the pair like a thunderbolt. Behind his back they rushed together with a clash.

This left Anderson free to draw the attention of the opposing three-quarter from his own right-hand partner: at the proper moment he transferred the ball to him with a swift low pass about the level of the hips, and the other handed it on again to

Clare. There was no one between him and the goal-line but the back: Percy sped towards him as straight as an arrow, a few yards inside the touch-line; as he approached him, he suddenly swerved outwards at the height of his speed, and in a moment was round him. The crowd yelled 'Varsity, 'Varsity!' but at that instant, when Clare was already past him, the back fell his full length, like a column from its base, and wound his serpentine arms round his opponent's ankles: the sprinter, thus lassoed in full career, fell with a crash upon his face, and the ball rolled harmlessly into touch.

Within a minute, however, the same manœuvre was repeated and Percy was racing down again upon his conqueror. This time he had the added experience of his methods, and in his heart a thirst for vengeance. As before, he swerved outwards, but as the back fell forward he turned in to meet him, leapt out of his encircling arms across his prostrate shoulders, and trotted quietly over the goal-line. The teams crossed over with the scores at one try each.

So far the game had gone in favour of the visitors in the tight scrimmages, but of the home team in the open. The greater height of the 'Varsity forwards put them at a disadvantage so far as mere pushing was concerned; for, weight against weight, a shorter man has more lifting power in his shoulders than a taller one. But their great length of limb gave the undergrads a finer turn of speed; and the game had been played at such a pace hitherto that youth, stamina, and condition were beginning to tell; so towards the end of the first half there was not much to choose between the packs. This gave the backs a better chance. Rorke had been playing like a fiend, and had already established his claim to a place in the team by showing himself the best half on the ground. Perhaps he did not know the game fully as well as some of the others, for ripeness of knowledge only comes with experience of first-class matches. But he made no mistakes, and played with a dash that was more than a sufficient equivalent for the wiliness of the veteran. Having neither fear nor hesitation, he could pick up the ball cleanly where others would bungle it. His tackling was terrific: every man that came within his reach he collared, and every man that he collared he grassed. His speed and demoniacal recklessness made openings that would have been utterly impossible to a less headlong player.

Directly after the interval the 'Varsity forwards were away with a rush, before the visitors had properly settled down.

The 'Varsity captain came through the scrimmage at the head of his men: the ball bounced off an inequality in the ground and struck against his knee, whence he caught it in his hands, and in a moment had initiated that most irresistible form of attack yet invented—a passing run between the forwards. Like an avalanche the eight men swept down the field: a tablecloth would have covered them: it was impossible to stop them, it was impossible to check them: the ball passed from hand to hand, no sooner was it received than it was gone elsewhere: it was elusive as a will-o'-the-wisp: to collar one single man was useless, to collar the whole eight was impossible: one or two were weeded out in their passage down the field, but the great mass remained, and, with the ball in their midst, they charged tumultuously over the goal-line. And for the first time Oxford was ahead.

For some time after this the battle was waged in neutral territory, then suddenly the Mohawk backs got the ball: it passed from hand to hand until the wing three-quarter received it well inside the quarter flag: he was hemmed in on the touch-line, but he was a veteran of many seasons and full of resource: as he ran he marked the position of every man on the field; far on the outside he saw his opposite wing coming up at speed: he stopped suddenly, and, with the swing of a throw-in from touch, slung the ball right across the field. It was a desperate expedient, but it came off. The hurtling flight of the ball was judged to an inch, and without checking his pace the Mohawk three-quarter met it in his stride, and galloped over the goal-line without any one being within yards of him. From this try the first goal of the match was kicked, and the Mohawks were once more ahead.

Fired by this reverse the Oxford forwards began to play desperately, and, outlasting their opponents, gradually established a complete superiority in the scrimmage. Time after time the ball came out to the halves, and the halves made openings for the three-quarters; but the tackling was too deadly, and both the 'Varsity wings were too light to force their way over the line: the passing was almost too mechanically accurate, so that it became easy to anticipate. Still they bombarded the enemy's line, and still success was denied to their efforts: the Mohawks had taken an extra man out of the scrimmage and were playing strictly on the defensive; and still the time wore on. At last Anderson said to Rorke:

'There's only another minute, old man. We must score again. Do try and get over yourself! It's our only chance.'

Even as he spoke the Mohawk forwards caught their opponents waiting to heel the ball, and with a last desperate effort rushed the scrimmage back almost to the quarter flag. There they came through the middle; but Rorke was waiting for them. He dropped on the ball and got up limping, for your Yorkshire forward is none too careful how he uses his feet. But he had no time to think of his bruises. Once more the 'Varsity held the scrum, and the ball came out straight to him. He feinted to pass and dodged inside his opposite half, then punted high in the air and followed up at the top of his speed. He had judged his kick accurately—the ball was falling straight over the goal-line; the Mohawk back and centre three-quarter were standing shoulder to shoulder to receive it. Rorke tore along with his teeth set and his eyes flashing. He was only three yards off them: he increased his pace, and, leaping as though from a springboard, dived head first over their shoulders. He met the ball in its flight, gathered it to his breast with his left arm, and pitched on the ground beyond on his left shoulder and right hand. A great silence fell on the multitude of spectators: they thought his neck was broken. Then, as he gathered himself together, put the ball on the ground, and walked out holding his wrist in his other hand, a mighty shout rent the heavens, and the crowd cheered until they were hoarse. A goal was kicked, and the 'Varsity were left victors by a goal and two tries to a goal and one try, for directly afterwards 'No side!' was called.

'I say, Reggie,' said Anderson, as the three friends walked off the ground side by side, 'I may as well congratulate you at once upon your Blue; but I didn't tell you to go and break your neck, all the same.'

'I'll be hanged,' said Clare, 'if I ever saw such a demon as he is when he gets his blood up. I believe he'd rather go through a stone wall than not, if it came in his way. You ought to have lived ten or eleven hundred years ago, and been a Berserker.'

'Berserker's just the name for him,' said Anderson; 'I think we'll have to call him that in future.'

'I wonder,' said Rorke, 'if they had Turkish baths in those ancient times? I know I feel very like one now. Meanwhile I must trot off to a doctor and have this sprain seen to while it's warm.'

NOTES ON A LATTER-DAY HUNTING TRIP IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

BY F. C. SELOUS

'THIS was the condition of the new development when the old horn was cast off. It shows that the new horn had already made considerable upward growth from the top of the core, and tearing out the hairs, the roots of which were in the skin, and many of which extended into or through the old horn. Until these were mostly torn asunder or were withdrawn from the canals by which they had penetrated the shell they served to prevent it from being easily lost; but finally, when these were all or nearly all severed, it fell off, as a favourable position occurred or some slight violence assisted the removal. I have never observed the animal to assist this process by rubbing its horns against convenient objects, but my opportunities have not been such as to authorise the statement that they do not do so.

'When the old horn was cast off, the new one, as we have already seen, had made a considerable growth above the core, which was already tipped with perfected horn, and a section below it was more or less hardened, or partially converted into horn. This intervening section gradually moved down the horn constantly invading the soft skin below, and followed above the perfected horn. All this time the horn was growing in length above the core, and assuming that posterior curvature, near its upper part, which so much resembles the curvature of the horn of the chamois. After the horn is perfected down to the top of the core, it ceases to increase in length, while the apparently converting process steadily progresses downward

along or around the core. The core being laterally compressed, the horn assumes that form, not, however, conforming precisely to the shape of the core, but extending considerably in front of it, where it is thinner than the posterior part. At the upper extremity of the wide, flattened part, the snag or prong is thrown out, which consists of little more than an abrupt termination of the wide part, with an elevated anterior point.

'By the latter part of winter, on the adult, the horn has attained about this stage of growth. From this it presses on, hardening in its downward growth till the latter part of summer or the commencement of the rut, by which time the growth is perfected down to the base, and is a complete weapon for warfare, and it so continues during the rut, and until the growth of the new horn is commenced and loosens the old one from its core, and raises it from its seat, as has been described.'

The range of the prong-horned antelope has been very much curtailed of late years by the steady occupation of the prairies and deserts of Western America by the insatiable white man. These antelopes once used to collect at certain seasons of the year, it is said, in immense droves, and even yet there are localities, I was told, where upwards of one hundred may sometimes be seen together. I have seen altogether perhaps a dozen little lots of these animals, varying in number from two—a female with her fawn—to a herd of from fifteen to twenty individuals, among which were two fine males. They always reminded me of springbucks in South Africa, both by their general colour and appearance and the arid nature of their surroundings, and I should think they must resemble Sœmerring's gazelles at a little distance even more nearly. The general colour of the prong-horned antelope is fawn, with a conspicuous white rump and a white belly. I once saw some does and fawns erect or in some way spread out the large patch of white hair on their rumps. I had left my horse, and was trying to stalk a fine buck, when these animals trotted past me, all unconscious of my proximity, though evidently uneasy at the sight of the horse with a saddle on him. As they trotted slowly past me, they all seemed to have their backs humped up, whilst the white hair on their hind quarters seemed to be bristled up in such a way as to make this part of their bodies look much larger than it really was. Instead of following the ewes, as I had hoped and expected he would have done, the old buck went off by himself and never gave me a chance of a shot at him.

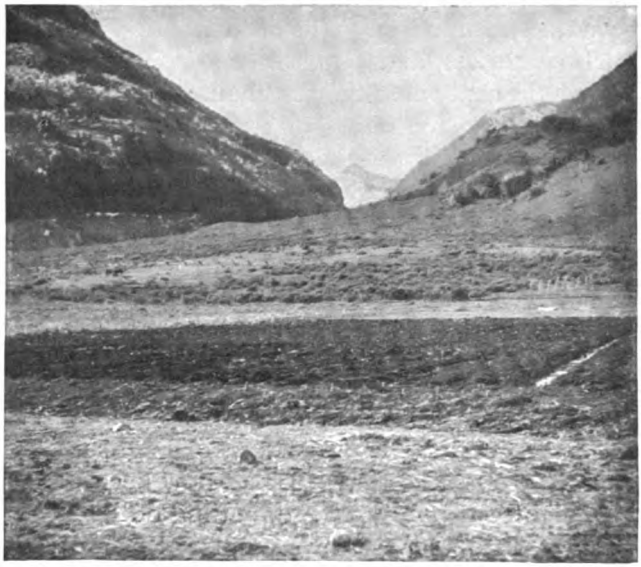
After having cleaned and cut up my first antelope as already described, we again proceeded on our journey, and on the afternoon of September 7 passed the embryo township of Marquette. Some six miles farther on we spied a few antelopes feeding near the foot of a low range of hills, distant about a mile away from the road. After carefully studying the ground I determined to try and stalk them, but it was first necessary to make a long *détour* on horseback in order to approach them from behind the hills. As we thought these antelopes must be accustomed to seeing people riding along the road, Graham and W. M. rode steadily forwards, whilst I rode in the opposite direction until well out of sight, and then cantered round to the back of the hills. On my way I put up six coyotes (*Canis latrans*), two of which stood and looked at me within one hundred yards, but I was afraid to fire at them for fear of disturbing the antelopes. Leaving my horse in a little hollow, I crept to the ridge of a low hill, and again espied the white rumps and buff-coloured hides of the wary game I was pursuing. After carefully studying the intervening ground, I commenced my stalk and at length got to within two hundred and fifty yards of the antelopes. They were seven in number; a big buck and six does and fawns. They were now all lying down, but as I watched they got up one after another, and fed slowly over a little rise in the ground,

HEAD OF PRONG-HORNED ANTELOPE SHOT NEAR DRY CREEK, SEPT. 1897

and I then saw that I could get nearer to them by crawling a short distance backwards, and getting into a little gully. I should probably have succeeded in creeping to within easy shot of them had not a coyote run out in front of me, right on to the antelopes, which must have taken fright and gone off at once, as, when I reached the top of the rise from which I had hoped to get a shot, they had disappeared, nor could I see them anywhere. I then went back and got my horse, and after riding about for some time at last sighted the antelopes on the top of a high terrace. On seeing me, they at once started to come down towards the lower ground, and by galloping hard I was able to get within two hundred yards of them as they raced by. The big buck came last, and I missed him with my first shot, but hit him with the next when he was about three hundred yards away and still going like the wind—an extraordinarily lucky shot, no doubt, but none the less useful on that account. The bullet broke the unfortunate animal's thigh high up, and then passing through his entrails came out behind his ribs on the other side. On being struck, he turned right round and came rushing towards me, and having crossed a little gully followed its course for a couple of hundred yards before lying down. I then killed him with a bullet through the lungs. He proved to be a remarkably fine animal, in splendid condition, with a finely coloured skin and carried a very pretty pair of horns fourteen and a half inches in length. He must have weighed, too, a great deal more than the first one I shot. The sun had now been down some time, and the light was fast going, so, cutting off his head and as much meat as I could pack on my horse, I started for camp, which I did not reach till long after dark.

We were now just within the mouth of the valley through which runs the South Fork of the Stinking Water River on emerging from the Rocky Mountains, and we travelled along the course of this stream for two days before reaching the last settler's ranche, a small log cabin inhabited by a hospitable Welsh family of the name of Davies; at least, Davies was a Welshman, though his wife was an Englishwoman. The North and South Forks of the Stinking Water River meet just above Cedar Mountain, and then run in one rushing stream through a deep canyon which divides this last spur of the Rattlesnake Mountains from the main range. A little below the gorge there are some very remarkable hot sulphur springs, some of which are situated just at the edge of the river, whilst others come bubbling up to the top of the water from the bed of the stream

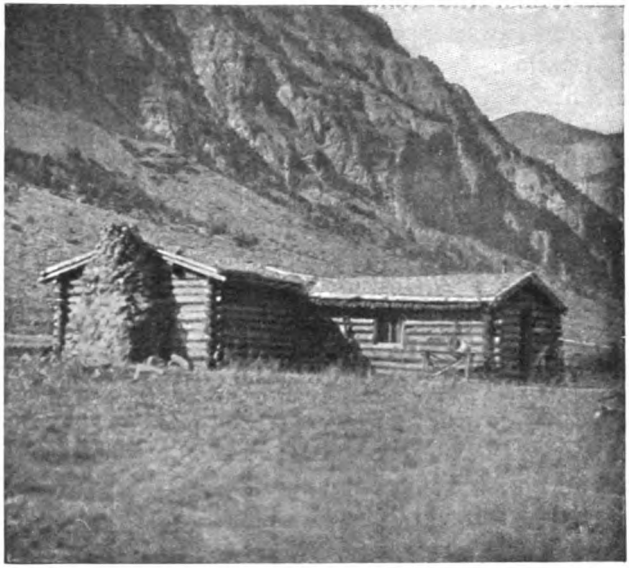
itself. The smell of these sulphur springs is very strong, and is perceptible at a distance of several miles down wind. To this fact does this beautifully clear mountain stream owe its unsavoury name, Stinking Water being the literal translation of its old Indian designation. The sulphur springs of which I have spoken are now known to possess medicinal properties of a very useful nature. Their temperature, which is exactly blood heat—ninety-eight degrees—never varies, summer or winter. If all I heard concerning the curative properties of these springs is true—they are said to be specially efficacious in cases of chronic rheumatism and syphilis—invalids will soon be resorting to them from all parts of the United States, if not from Europe. Already the world-renowned Colonel William Cody has started a small township in their vicinity named after its founder, 'Cody City,' whilst a small house of accommodation, and a plank-built bathroom heated with a stove in winter, have been put up at the springs themselves. Both the North and South Forks of the Stinking Water River, clear cold mountain streams of purest water, are full of delicious trout. They contain greyling too, which I thought very good eating, though locally they are not much esteemed. The trout are not able to get more than two-thirds of the way up the South Fork, owing to the fact that they cannot pass a certain small waterfall, but whenever we were camped near the water below this fall we could always secure a good dish of trout for breakfast or dinner. They were uneducated fish—



THE VALLEY OF THE SOUTH FORK OF THE STINKING WATER RIVER

which is what I like—and when on the feed would rise steadily at almost any kind of fly. They were of a fair size, too, on the average, and we caught many weighing from 1½ lbs. to 2 lbs. Once I caught a dozen or so with an artificial minnow that must have averaged nearly 2 lbs. each.

Davies' cabin, picturesquely situated just at the junction of Cabin Creek with the South Fork of Stinking Water, we at last reached by midday of September 9. This was the goal of our waggon journey, as the narrow trail leading up the gorge into the rugged and uninhabited mountains beyond was impassable for anything but pack ponies. We lost no time in off-loading the waggon (which we left in charge of Mr. Davies) and arranging the loads for the horses, and on the afternoon of September 10 bade adieu to the kind-hearted Welshman and his wife, and commenced the last section of our journey into the main range of the Rocky Mountains, where we hoped to meet with at least a few wapiti and mule deer. That afternoon we did ten or twelve miles along a very rough track, sometimes in the bed of the stream, sometimes along steep slopes and stone slides high above it, but always in a very wild and beautiful country with rugged pine-clad mountains above and on either side of us, and rushing water below us. In the evening we caught a few trout for supper, and camped in a lovely little glade about 8000 feet above sea level.

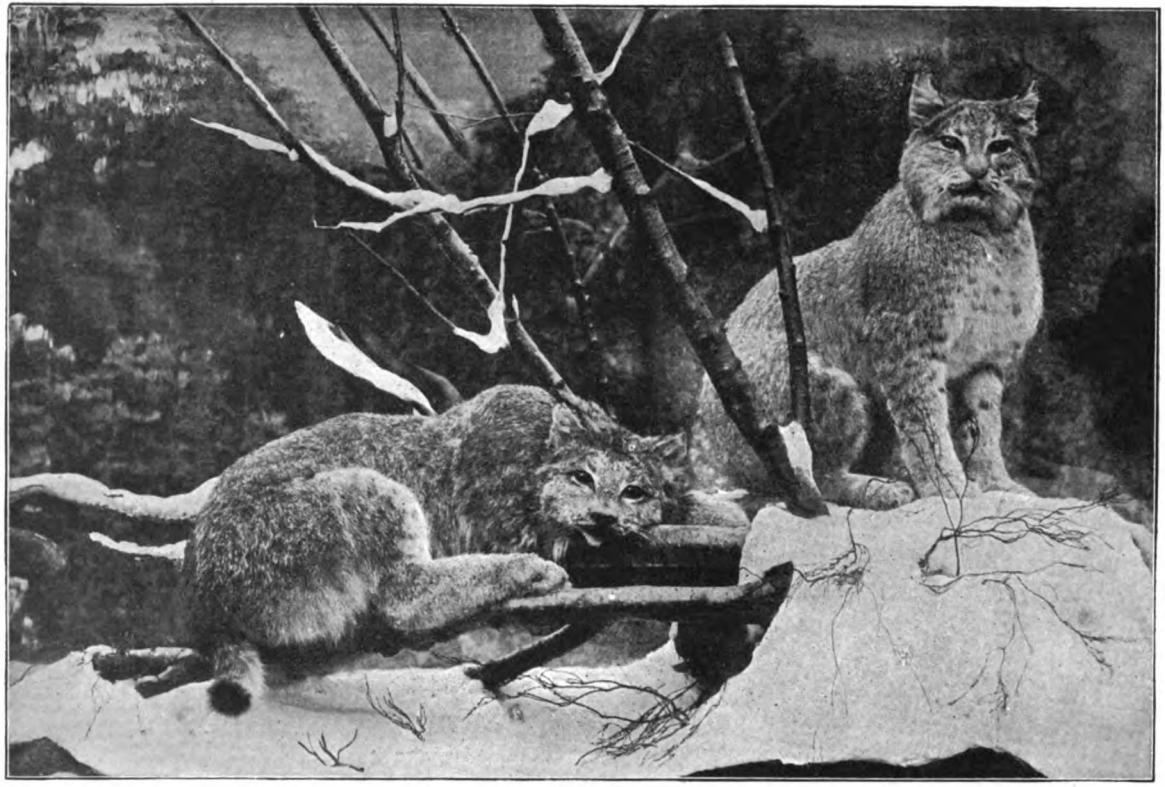


DAVIES' RANCHE, SOUTH FORK OF STINKING WATER RIVER, SEPT. 1897

Late in the afternoon of the following day we reached a spot where Graham had intended us to camp for a week or ten days, as he thought that it would prove a good centre from

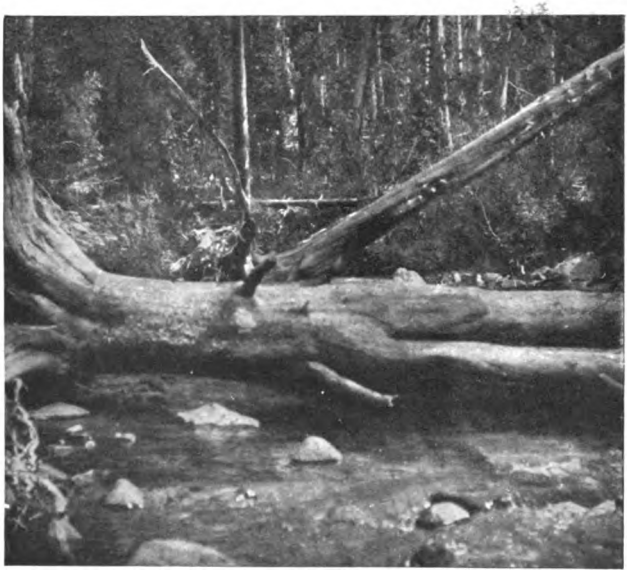
which to hunt wapiti. Another party of English sportsmen—and women—whose fresh horse tracks along the trail had already caused us some anxiety, had, however, selected the same locality for a camp, so of course we had to move on at once to get beyond the sphere of their influence. Although we remained unavoidably, for the next month or so, more or less within touch of one another, I scarcely think we could have interfered with one another's sport in any way, as we were in the midst of a vast tract of country, throughout which wapiti were everywhere sparingly scattered, whilst they were nowhere particularly numerous.

Whilst the tents were being pitched, I walked a short distance away, and was just strolling through a grove of pine-trees when I saw an animal coming towards me at a slow trot. At first I thought it was a young deer coming along with its head held down; then I thought it must be a puma; and finally I saw that it was a lynx. I stood perfectly still, and it came steadily on to within fifteen yards before seeming to notice me. Then it halted, and stood looking intently at me, evidently not quite able to make me out, and all the time twitching its little bob tail. I had not my rifle with me, so could do nothing but watch it. Presently it turned and trotted off sideways, and soon disappeared amongst some low scrub near the river. As soon as it was out of sight I ran back to camp, and picking up my rifle returned in search of the lynx. I had been looking for it for several minutes and, as there were several patches of thick scrub about, was commencing to give up all hope of ever seeing it again, when it suddenly came into view once more, trotting slowly along as before. I at once fired at and hit it, the expanding Mannlicher bullet tearing a big hole through the skin where it came out. It proved to be a very fair specimen—a male—of the Canadian lynx (*Lynx Canadensis*), which I was very pleased to have secured for my collection, as these animals, though frequently trapped, are not often shot. We had now reached a country where, with luck, wapiti might have been encountered at any moment, since it was impossible to walk many miles in any direction without crossing tracks of these magnificent animals, either fresh or not many days old, whilst here and there small spruce saplings, half peeled of their bark and with their lower branches beaten to the ground, showed where some lordly stag had lately rubbed the velvet from his horns. Yet I hunted hard for twenty days, and during that time probably walked on an average quite twenty miles a day



CANADIAN LYNXES SHOT IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS (MALE SHOT 1897, FEMALE SHOT 1898)

in very rough country, before I carried my first wapiti head back to camp. During this time we moved about a good deal, at one time being camped at a height of 10,500 feet above sea level on the summit of the pass which divides the head waters of the South Fork of Stinking Water from those of a tributary of the Wind River, and then crossing the divide and hunting to the south-west as far as what I think was the main branch of the Wind River itself, working back again towards the end of September. Never once, however, though I wandered over so much country during the height of the rutting season, did I hear a wapiti bull challenging a rival. The noise they make, I am told, can be heard at a great distance, especially at night or early in the morning, but the quality of the sound is altogether different to the roaring or bellowing of the European red deer during the love season, and is always spoken of as whistling or bugling. When very much the victim of the tender passion the wapiti often seems to lose all sense of fear, and becomes, in the expressive language of the Western frontiersman, 'clean crazy.' In this condition an amorous bull will sometimes not only not run away from a suspicious object or sound, but come towards it, challenging as he advances. My companion, W. M., when out with Graham one day towards the end of September, heard a bull whistling late in the afternoon, and had approached within a short distance of it—though he could not see it as it was hidden behind a piece of rising ground—when he made a slight noise by displacing a stone. The wapiti evidently heard the sound



GOOD WAPITI GROUND IN THE EARLY AUTUMN

SHOT IT THROUGH THE NECK

and at once advanced towards it, the tops of his horns soon appearing above the crest of the rise. My friend then sat down, holding his rifle at his shoulder in readiness for a shot. Gradually the great stag's horns came more and more fully into view, then its finely modelled head appeared, and lastly the great swollen neck, looking larger than it actually was from the length of its bristling coat of dark-brown hair. As he came forwards the angry animal constantly gave vent to various sounds which ranged from a clear musical note, like that of a bugle call, to something nearly resembling the braying of a donkey. This bull was in possession of four cows, which were, however, at this time out of sight behind him, and he not only seemed to be prepared to keep them against all comers, should his rights be disputed, but even appeared to be in such a jingoistic frame of mind that he was anxious to have them disputed. In fact, he seemed to be not only willing to fight, should occasion arise, but anxious to find an occasion to display his prowess. My friend was, of course, in full view as soon as the wapiti's eyes were above the rise, as was also Graham and a very well broken black retriever dog, which sat during this trying time solemnly still without moving or barking. W. M., fearing lest the wapiti might suddenly recover from its frenzy, or that the dog might rush in and frighten it away, deemed it wise not to wait till it showed its whole body above the rise, and so shot it through the neck. It at once dropped in its tracks, but rolled some distance down the hill, breaking one of the tines of its horns short off against a stone. On stepping off the distance from where he had been sitting to the spot where the wapiti first fell, my friend found that only seventeen yards had separated them when he fired. The following morning, when Graham and W. M. went to cut up the dead wapiti and bring in the head, my wife went with them to take some photographs, and whilst assisting in the search for the tine that had broken off, came on the body of a mouse, which had evidently been killed and squashed flat by the sudden fall of the great stag!

Judging from the accounts I have read of hunting in the Rocky Mountains some twenty years ago, wapiti were then very easily shot. At that time they were, of course, very plentiful, and wherever they had not been much persecuted probably not very wary. Now things are very different, at any rate in the district where I have hunted them amongst the mountains to the east of the Yellowstone Park; for there, at any rate, they are not only very wary, but far from plentiful.

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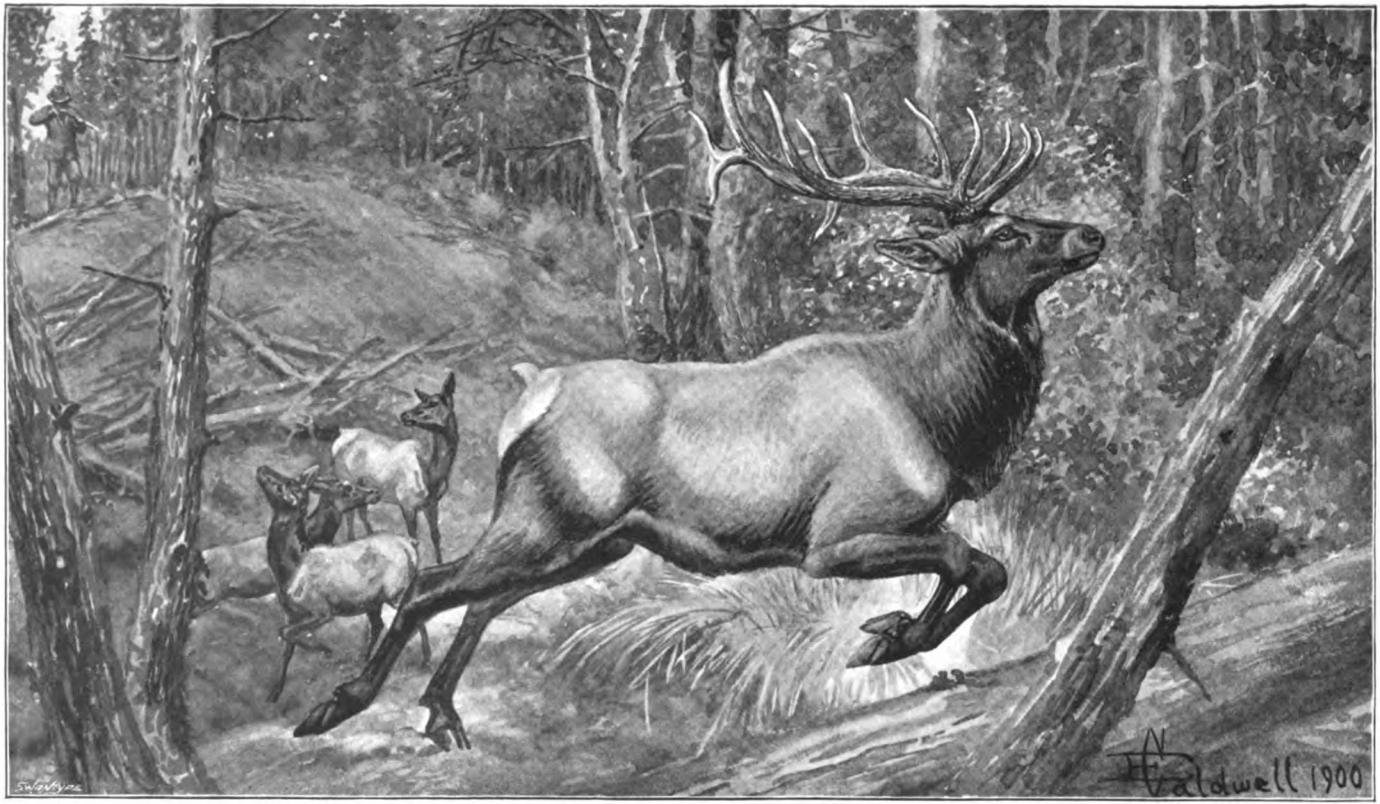
fine animals of their kind, are by no means yet extinct. The grandeur and wildness of the scenery itself in these American mountains was to me a constant delight, for whilst tracking wapiti, high up near the verge of timber line, I was always wandering through scenes of surpassing loveliness; and once, when on suddenly emerging from the shady depths of a dark pine forest I found myself on the sedgy shore of a little lake set like a gem in the bosom of the fragrant woods, the picture presented to me was so exquisitely beautiful that it seemed to be the realisation of a scene that had been flashed across my mental vision in some still half-remembered dream. Only in my dream there had been wild creatures feeding by the water's edge, as indeed there might have been in the actual picture I have endeavoured to describe; for we found tracks of both wapiti and mule deer on the grassy slope which lay between the lake and the surrounding forests, but these wary animals do not nowadays often show themselves in any open place during the daytime.

DEAD WAPITI, SHOT BY W. M., SEPT. 1897

During the month of September, as I have said, I hunted with but little luck. I had, however, one excellent chance at a young wapiti bull. Having seen pretty fresh tracks when out by myself late one afternoon, I proceeded to look for the animals that were responsible for them early the next morning. It was still early when, having climbed to the summit of a detached range of hills in company with Jinks, we caught sight of two wapiti hinds amongst the pine-trees at the foot of the slope. Taking stock of the wind, we at once commenced to descend

towards them, hoping to find that they were stragglers from a herd, with which we hoped there might be a big bull. We got down the hillside as quickly as possible, and had just reached the bottom, well to the right of the hinds, when we heard some stones move still farther to our right, and the next moment I saw a large animal trotting amongst the trees at a distance of not more than seventy or eighty yards, and, as the pine-trees were here growing not very thickly together, soon made it out to be a bull wapiti. It had evidently neither seen nor scented us, but must have heard us. When I first saw it, it was coming obliquely past us, and as I thought it was going to stop, I waited for it to do so. It very soon came to a halt, and stood broadside to me, with its head just beyond the stem of a large tree, which covered its whole neck and part of its shoulder. Another tree covered its hind quarters, but all the rest of its body was exposed, and there was nothing therefore to hinder a bullet from reaching its lungs. I was now sitting down with my elbows resting on my knees, and this large animal was not more than one hundred yards away from me. As I pulled the trigger I believed myself to be perfectly steady, and felt absolutely sure that I was not only about to hit, but to kill my first wapiti with a shot through the lungs. At the report of the rifle, however, he showed no sign of being hit, but just moved a couple of steps, and having half turned at the same time, stood in such a way that I could see nothing of him but his head and a piece of his hind quarters. Thinking he would again walk forward and

TRAVELLING WITH PACK PONIES UP THE SOUTH FORK OF THE STINKING WATER RIVER. CROSSING A BIT OF ROCK



AT FULL GALLOP THROUGH THE PINE-TREES

give me another chance of a shot at a vital spot, I reserved my fire. After standing still for a few seconds, however, he dashed off without giving another chance, as he was covered more or less completely by tree-stems. His actions after my shot had certainly given no indication that he was wounded ; but it is difficult to make sure on such a point, and I could not believe I had missed him; indeed, I fully expected to find him lying dead at no great distance, shot through the lungs. However, after having followed on his tracks for several miles without finding a single drop of blood, I could only conclude that I had made a clean miss. I have made many bad shots in my time, but never, I think, quite so bad a one as this. In fact, it was an unaccountably bad shot, as I was sitting down, and quite cool and steady as far as I know. A Mannlicher bullet sometimes goes wrong, I am told, owing to the nickel coating parting from the lead core as it leaves the muzzle of the rifle. If something of this sort did not happen I certainly made a record bad shot on this occasion. I must say I felt very sore about it, though the wapiti I had failed to kill was, I knew, not a very fine one. Jinks thought he was about a three-year-old bull, and said his head would not have been worth carrying to camp ; an assertion which, though comforting in some ways, did not make me feel any better satisfied with my bad shooting. Besides this remarkably easy shot at a young wapiti bull, I got another difficult running shot at what I think was a very fine one. Graham and I had been tracking a small herd of six or seven cows accompanied by a bull—as we knew from the hoof-prints—for many hours, when, on reaching the top of a rise which we had ascended amongst thick-growing pine-trees, we came suddenly to the edge of an open piece of ground, which sloped steeply down to where it again met the forest some hundred and fifty yards below. This piece of ground was covered with grass, but quite devoid of trees or bushes. Immediately I reached the edge of the timber, but before I had stepped into the open ground I saw three or four wapiti hinds standing just on the edge of the forest at the foot of the open grass slope, and almost at the same moment caught sight of a great bull, with what seemed a beautiful pair of widespread antlers, going off at full gallop through the pine-trees. The chance was not a good one, but I knew I should not get another, so getting the sight on to some part of his back—I was high above him —I fired and thought I had hit him, as at the shot he swung right round, and running under the thick low-hanging branches

of a large pine suddenly stopped. He was, however, quite invisible. Then the hinds came running across the lower edge of the open ground, and the next moment I saw the branches of the pine where the stag had been standing move, and caught occasional glimpses of parts of him as he once more dashed off amongst the tree-stems. This time, however, I found it impossible to get a shot at him. This wapiti stag did not rejoin the hinds, but went off by himself, and we never saw him again. We found no blood on his spoor, and whether my bullet hit him, grazed him, or missed him altogether, I do not know, but as I did not get him I hope it was the latter. It was a poor chance at best, and the luck was never with me at this time, as it was when I killed the big prong buck, and again later on after I had had a month's chastening.

Besides the two wapiti bulls which I actually saw and fired at during September, as I have described above, I one day caught half a glimpse of a third. Graham and I got his fresh spoor high up near timber line one morning. Heavy rain having fallen the previous night, all the twigs and pine needles lying on the ground beneath the trees had been well soaked and so made no noise when trodden upon as they bent to the foot, instead of rustling or cracking as they do when dry. We were thus enabled to track this wapiti bull almost noiselessly, and had the timber been a little more open I should doubtless have got a shot at him. Unfortunately, he was lying in a thick patch of spruce, and although we saw a bough move as he jumped up, and I just caught a glimpse of his whitish rump as he dashed away, I had neither the time nor the opportunity for a shot. I ran forward as hard as I could, but saw nothing more of him in the thick timber. We then took up the tracks and followed them a long way, but never caught sight of the wary brute again ; nor, indeed, after having once disturbed a wapiti bull, have I ever set eyes on one of these animals again, though I have followed some for hours.

(*To be continued.*)

AMERICAN JOCKEYSHIP

BY H. E. ROWLANDS

ONE of the most noteworthy features of the recent flat racing season was the wonderful success of the American jockeys. If our own jockeys do not want to be superseded by Americans this year, it behoves them to search at once for the secret of this success, and, having found it, to take steps accordingly. In our pride we have been slow to acknowledge superior jockeyship on the part of the Americans, and many people maintain that the choosing of their mounts is sufficient reason in itself to account for their success. This theory was hard to refute with any certainty in the case of Sloan early in the season, but later the performances of Martin and the brothers Reiff clearly show that though there may be something in the above theory there must be something else as well.

The question is, What is it? Observation points to two main differences between the Americans and ourselves:

1. As to seat.
2. As to methods.

1st. As to seat. The difference between the English and American seats lies in the erect body and comparatively straight knee of the former, and the crouching body and bent knee of the latter.

The effect of this difference is twofold. With the Americans (*a*) the weight is brought farther forward; (*b*) the surface opposed to the wind is smaller, as compared with the English.

Is (*a*) an advantage?

Let us first deal with the question mechanically. The follow-

ing appear to be the arguments most frequently heard against it.

The racehorse should admittedly have a light forehand in order to obtain freedom of action, reach, and stride, and so that the forehand should not tire quickly by carrying unnecessary weight or suffer more than can be helped from concussion. By putting all the extra weight on the forehand, its action is impeded, it tires more quickly, and concussion is increased.

Again, though the horse's own weight is borne more by the forehand than by the hind quarters, yet the difference is not very great, and the hind quarters take nearly half (this can easily be proved by suitably constructed weighing machines). Why, therefore, when adding extra weight, should we not let them take their share of that also, so that the forehand and hind quarters should tire equally and not one more rapidly than the other? Again, the effort to recover from the smallest mistake must obviously be greater when the extra weight is all forward, and the chances of making such mistake increased.

There may be many other arguments, but the above appear the chief.

The question now arises, do these arguments hold good, or can they be disproved? Let us see.

It cannot be denied that the horse's forehand is mechanically better constructed for bearing weight than the hind quarters, since the column of bones of which it is composed more nearly approaches the perpendicular. (Put your hand on a dog's back over the shoulders and press: it is surprising what weight even a small dog can stand, but press over the hind quarters and he quickly collapses. The same would hold good with a horse, as he is very similarly constructed.) Neither can it be denied that the hind quarters are better constructed for propulsion, as the column of bones being more zigzag is capable of greater extension.

Now, if the greater weight be placed on the forehand it must not be imagined that it alone has the whole of the extra work to do; far from it: though it has to carry the weight, the hind quarters have to propel it, and moreover at a high rate of speed.

If the weight were placed so as to bear partly on the hind quarters, the forehand would escape a portion of the extra work which they are eminently constructed for doing, whereas the hind quarters, in addition to having to propel the extra weight, would have to carry a portion of it, a work for which they are ill adapted.

The writer is aware that a small portion of the propulsion is derived from the straightening of the fore fetlocks, which at the moment of being straightened are directed in a slightly forward position; on the other hand, it must be remembered that even with the American seat the whole of the extra weight is not borne by the forehand alone—the hind quarters take a large share when the hind legs reach their most advanced position well under the body; moreover, instantaneous photography not only shows that there is a period during the stride in the gallop when the fore legs are off the ground and the whole weight is borne by the hind legs, but there is actually a period when the whole weight is borne by one hind leg alone.

Again, it is a known fact that the racehorse carries proportionately more weight on the forehand than the heavier types of horses from which such fast work is not required; in other words, in proportion as greater speed is demanded, the weight is taken off the hind quarters and brought on to the forehand by the horse's natural conformation.

The horse also by nature increases this weight still further when in fast motion; for when at top speed he stretches out his head and neck to the full, thereby bringing more weight forward. Consequently the slower the work required the less necessity to advance the weight, as, to use a *reductio ad absurdum*, if at a standstill all the extra weight were entirely on the forehand, it would be doing extra work undoubtedly, whereas the hind quarters would be doing no extra work at all, as there would be no propulsion for them to accomplish, and they are not carrying any of the extra weight.

Again, with regard to the stride. Is it impeded by the weight being forward? The stride does not depend solely on the forward reach of the fore legs, but to a greater extent on the strength of the propulsion given by the hind limbs, especially when the forehand is raised off the ground. If this propulsion is weak the stride is short, if strong the stride is long; hence of the two evils to impede, the hind quarters would be the greater of the two.

From the above arguments it seems, therefore, that the faster the pace the greater the tax on the hind quarters as compared with the tax on the forehand, and therefore they should be assisted as much, or rather impeded as little, as possible by putting the jockey's weight well forward.

Now turning to (*b*)—*i.e.*, the question of the surface opposed to the wind. Still speaking mechanically, the advantage is greater

in direct proportion as there is less surface opposed. There cannot possibly be two opinions about that; and as the American crouch reduces that surface by fully one-third of the total surface of the jockey, that advantage must be considerable.

Hitherto all the arguments put forward have been mechanical; but as neither horses or jockeys are machines, it may be urged that the practical disadvantages outweigh the mechanical advantages. Let us see what these chief practical disadvantages are.

The practical disadvantages to (*a*) seem to be a greater likelihood of making a mistake, such as a stumble, &c., a greater difficulty in recovering from such a mistake; and a probable increase of the disastrous effects of strain and concussion to the fore limbs in training. These three disadvantages may, to some extent, be admitted, but the first two might be practically ignored: a horse may run frequently without once making a mistake, and there is nothing to show that horses ridden by the Americans make more mistakes than others.

As regards increased liability to break down, about which Huggins should be able to give a good opinion, if it is the case we must put up with it if we want to win races: one could scarcely expect our boys and jockeys to ride in the English style in gallops and in the American in races, neither would it pay.

The practical disadvantage to (*b*), or rather the disadvantage of the crouch, of which (*b*) is the mechanical advantage, is loss of command over the horse, and this one disadvantage alone must be admitted to be a very great one indeed, especially when finishing. But there is this to be said: a race is not all finish, and it is most noticeable with the American jockeys how frequently they have won their race before they reach the finish, so that there is often no finishing to be done. But let us take the case of the American in a close finish. When a horse sprawls or rolls or swerves in a finish, it is generally because he is beat; he may sometimes shy at the sight or sound or pain of the whip, or there may be other causes, but one may safely say that nine times out of ten it is because he is beat. How much more beat would he not be if, all through the earlier part of the race, he had not had the advantage of less surface being opposed to the wind?—he would probably be nowhere near the finish at all. If, again, he does not sprawl or swerve, may it not be, to some extent, that owing to the above advantage he is not so beat? and moreover, in this case the advantage of the English seat as regards the greater power to keep a horse straight does not come into play.

In addition, however, to holding a horse together and keeping him straight, there is the urging him forward, and, if necessary, squeezing the last ounce of him. For this purpose the English seat is the better; but this admission is qualified when one remembers that, though better for actually forcing the horse to greater exertion, it is at the same time to some extent retarding him by offering a larger surface to the wind. However well and pluckily a horse may fight out a finish if left to himself, it is natural that the efforts of a good rider should induce him to even greater exertions; but if at the same time the rider exerts a certain drawback, in the literal sense of the word, a part of these extra exertions are wasted—*i.e.*, their full benefit is not reaped.

The writer does not wish to convey the impression that he thinks the Americans better finishers; on the contrary, he feels pretty confident that, given the best American and English jockeys on two identical animals, both level and equally beat fifty yards from the post, the English jockey would be the winner far oftener than the other; but after careful thought and observation he has arrived at the conclusion that what the Englishman gains at the finish he more than loses in the earlier part of the race. The run off of the dead heat in October between Blend and Poulton, the respective mounts of Bradford and J. Reiff, was most interesting and instructive to the careful observer. After the race Blend appeared the more distressed of the two. It may be said that if that were the case it would be an argument dead against the conclusions arrived at above, in that Bradford, by superior horsemanship, at the finish succeeded in getting his mount within the shortest of heads of his less beat opponent. Granted; but the point is this: the very reason why Blend was the more beat was because he was ridden in the English style; had he been ridden in the American style he would have been less beat and would probably have won.

So much for the first main difference, as regards seat; now let us turn to the second, as regards methods.

Without laying down any hard and fast rule, the chief difference between the English and American methods may be said to consist in the fact that whereas the English jockeys watch and wait for and race against each other, the Americans more or less ignore the field and keep only the one object in view of getting from one post to another in the shortest time they can. This difference was more marked some time ago than it is now.

When Sloan first appeared in this country he used generally to lead his field almost from the start. He was not, perhaps, quicker 'off the mark,' as a rule, than many of our jockeys, as probably want of command over the horse, owing to the crouching seat, is, at the start, a disadvantage; but, before going a furlong, Sloan was almost invariably leading. At first our jockeys, thinking he would come back to them, would go on waiting and watching each other for three-quarters of the race, while all the time Sloan, ignoring them and making his own pace, would be gradually increasing his lead. By the time the English jockeys had begun to think of catching him it was too late: his lead might be reduced, but catch him they could not.

This was not so marked later in the season, as we have begun to realise that it does not pay to let the Americans get too far ahead, since they do not come back in the way we thought they would; moreover, we have had other Americans with us this year, consequently the pace set throughout is generally stronger than formerly; yet few of our jockeys ever set a strong pace themselves when no American happens to be in the field, with the result that false, muddling races still occur. One of the reasons of this is undoubtedly our want of knowledge of pace. We have been slow to recognise how very important this knowledge is; our jockeys do not seem to make a point of trying their best to acquire it, our trainers do not seem to assist their boys and teach them how to acquire it. Let us hope they soon will do so, and to this end the more frequent use of the watch would probably help. In races of all descriptions this setting a stronger pace has of late years been found to answer. We can, many of us, remember when, in an ordinary mile foot race, the pace set at the start used usually to be a mere jog; even in a quarter the pace was often feeble to what it is now, when 100 yards pace is set from the very start.

Now, of course horses' temperaments and capabilities vary as much as human beings', and there are many with which a waiting policy is essential. In riding a waiting race the difference between the Americans and ourselves is that the former usually prefer to wait in front. Waiting in front must not be confused with setting the pace, though in watching a race it is not always easy for even the most careful observer to be certain what tactics are being employed. However, they are as different as can be: in the one the rider relies on his own judgment of pace, and in the other he regulates his pace

according to the rest of the field exactly as if he were behind, only instead of being behind he is in front, or at least somewhere in the front rank. The danger of adopting this policy is that it tends at times to a faster run race than one may wish, and it is not always easy to get into the front rank, especially if one does not happen to get off well; but against that there are the advantages of having a clear line in front, no danger of being shut in, very little of being interfered with, it is encouraging to a soft-hearted animal, who may often be cajoled along in front when he would refuse to make an effort behind, and one does not have to make up lost ground at a finish, but may even have a little to spare; so that, if one is beat, there is the satisfaction of knowing it is probably because the horse is not good enough, and not one's own fault for coming too late, or getting shut in, &c. &c., excuses so often heard. Strange to say, Blend, in the hands of M. Cannon, was the means of furnishing another most instructive finish when just beaten a head by L. Reiff on Orestes. Not that L. Reiff can compare with M. Cannon in a finish, but he won that race simply through adopting the American methods; he was well placed throughout, and 100 yards from the post had just sufficient in hand to withstand Cannon's powerful finish.

Again, in a race there is never any time to waste: one can't afford to lose time, and this the Americans realise more than we do. If they chance to be badly placed, they are quicker to take an opportunity to get out of the difficulty, they make opportunities; our jockeys seem to wait and trust to an opportunity luckily arriving; but often it never comes, or if it does it comes too late. When Forfarshire was beaten by Democrat at Sandown, everybody was full of excuses for the defeat and said that it was bad luck. It was bad luck on the horse, if he really is the better horse of the two, which subsequent running seems to show he is; yet full credit must be given to Sloan, who, when the crucial point came, was well placed, with a bit in hand, simply owing to his tactics—it was through no fluke he got there. It is said S. Loates was shut in, and did not get an opening till too late; yet, with all due respect for his horsemanship, one can't help the question, why was he shut in? Why, in fact, are horses, that ought to have won, so often shut in when ridden by our jockeys, and why does one so seldom hear that excuse given for the Americans?[1] The question is already

[1] Lester Reiff, the best of the American jockeys, got shut in on Airs and Graces in the Old Cambridgeshire, however.—Ed.

answered. Another point to be noted with the Americans is the frequency with which they let their mounts run their own races. There is no denying that some horses run better when allowed to run their own way. The writer has heard it argued that a horse is by no means a fool, or such a fool as we often take him for: he may not know a great number of things his rider does, but probably one thing he knows better, and that is his own capacity.

With this argument the writer does not agree: a horse may be intelligent, but he can know nothing of how far he has to go or the capacity of the other horses running, or a host of other things of which his rider is aware, so in comparison with his rider he is a fool. 'Exactly,' one may say, 'and for that very reason the race should be run the rider's way and not the horse's.' No, not always; for the horse is, unfortunately, sometimes fool enough not to know what a fool he is and that his jockey knows better than himself; consequently he prefers to trust himself and go his own way rather than his rider's, so he starts off at best pace knowing he has got to race, finds himself being pulled and hauled at, does not know why, so tires himself out fighting against the restraint; presently the restraint ceases, and every moment he expects the whip or spur, he gets frightened, cowed, loses his head, and the whole thing is beyond his comprehension; all he knows is that when he wanted to go he was stopped and when he wanted to stop he was beaten. When a horse is such a fool as this, is it not better to let him remain one and do his best in his own way?

The majority of horses can, of course, be taught: some learn quickly, some slowly, some will not learn; and if a horse's foolishness takes the form of fighting against control, of being excitable, headstrong, impetuous, fretful, &c., his jockey takes more out of him by trying to restrain him than he takes out of himself by running his own way.

The Americans appear to believe in this, or anyway to put it in practice, more than our jockeys, which accounts for animals often running more kindly in their hands.

Finally, for some reason or other our jockeys appear to take the greatest delight in drawing it fine; they seem to think they deserve greater credit for winning by a head than by half a length. It is quite right and humane not to take more out of one's mount than one need, and drawing it fine is all right provided one can make an absolute certainty of never drawing it too fine; but no man alive can always do that. The Americans

have already taught us the folly of this habit more than once; let us hope we have learnt our lesson.

We will now sum up the above observations and try and reduce them to a more concise form.

1. As to seat.
   (*a*) The American seat brings the weight more forward, thereby putting it chiefly on the part of the horse best constructed for carrying it, and not on the hind quarters, which are ill adapted for weight-carrying, so leaving them greater freedom for their special function of propulsion.
   (*b*) Less wind pressure.
2. As to methods.
   (*a*) The Americans have a better knowledge of pace and usually set a stronger pace.
   (*b*) In a waiting race prefer waiting in front.
   (*c*) Never waste time.
   (*d*) Let their horses run more in their own way.
   (*e*) Avoid drawing it fine.

One word more, but a most important one. There is a limit to all things and one should avoid extremes. The writer does not intend to convey the impression that he thinks the jockey should sit between the horse's ears, or that a two mile race should be run in the same way as a five furlong sprint; conditions change and with them the tactics to be employed.

In the hunting field the American seat would be absurd; it would not be necessary, as the pace is slower and therefore the tax on the hind quarters less, the raising of the forehand to a sufficient height to clear fences would be rendered more difficult, the advantage of less wind pressure would be reduced owing to the slower pace, and last, but not least, the want of command would be fatal. To a lesser extent this applies to steeplechasing, and lesser still over hurdles, each in degree as it more nearly approaches the flat race. On the polo ground the American seat would be absurd, for there command over the pony is a first essential; probably it would not pay in the case of a sixteen-stone man, and this is consistent with the argument, as the horse with such a weight could not possibly attain his maximum speed; probably it would not pay downhill if at all steep, as in this case the disadvantages would act in greater force.

Again, as regards methods. Conditions are so variable that no hard and fast rules can possibly be laid down; sound judgment is most necessary, but no man's judgment can be so

discerning that he can despise method altogether. The judgment of the Americans is by no means remarkable ; there are no two opinions on the fact that Sloan lost the Oaks through bad judgment, and his riding at Ascot was open to severe criticism. The American success is not due to their superior judgment but to their methods. With jockeys, as with generals, the best make the fewest mistakes, but no generals can despise established maxims.

In praise of the English jockeys it may truly be said that in the higher art of horsemanship as compared with jockeyship they are certainly superior to the Americans.

If there is anything in the above arguments it speaks volumes for our jockeys that they hold their own as well as they do, and if the three leading Americans have higher percentages of wins to losses than any three of our leading jockeys, the wonder is, again assuming the above arguments to be worth anything, that we can hold our own at all ; that we do so is owing to horsemanship alone.

M. Cannon has given us many a treat this year, and S. Loates deserves the highest praise for his great performances in the week October 31 to November 4 ; but be it noted that in only one instance of his twelve successes (unless the writer's memory is at fault, which is possible, as he has no references at hand) was he opposed by either of the three leading Americans.

Exactly how much of the American success is due to each factor is impossible to say ; probably no two individuals would hold the same view, probably the Americans themselves don't know ; but the result of their combination is undeniable.

There is no reason to suppose finality is yet reached ; by experimenting and keeping pace with the times we shall improve, and may shortly discover some better system still. Little Hare deserves great credit for striking out a line of his own ; he appears to have adopted the crouch, but not the short stirrup : perhaps he is right—no doubt he has his reasons, and elegance certainly can't be one of them.

In these days of advance and change there is nothing strange in the discovery of something new in the art of riding ; whether a race or otherwise, it should not come as a surprise to us. Even the horse himself has changed. Knowledge of the horse and everything pertaining to him has always been to Englishmen a source of pride and delight, it is consequently a bitter pill to swallow that these changes should be discovered and introduced into this country by any other than ourselves ; but let us take our pill and benefit.

PAGES FROM A COUNTRY DIARY

Jan. 1.—To-day being a general holiday, the youth of the neighbourhood spend it in more or less ferocious games of football. Consequently, being in the village this afternoon, and remembering that I am a Vice-President of the Football Club, I looked in at the field where the local 'Wanderers' were engaged in conflict with some neighbouring 'Rovers.' I could not help being struck by, first, the good humour, or rather unconcern, with which the players treated the rough handling to which they subjected each other, and secondly, the fury with which their respective partisans hounded them on to further efforts: the yells of the latter could be heard quite half a mile away from the field. The most active person on the ground appeared to my untutored eye to be the gentleman who blows a whistle.

The hold which football has gained over the affections of the 'masses' within the last few years is perfectly astounding. When I was a lad, and took an active interest in the game, public football was confined to a few purely amateur clubs, the Corinthians, the Wanderers, and so forth; now every town and village supports one or more clubs; special 'Football' Editions are published of all the provincial evening papers; and I am

told that a popular match near one of the great manufacturing towns will attract a larger crowd than even a race meeting; whilst it appears that a professional football player is far more highly paid than his brother cricketer. Nay, have we not all read of late of how Thomas Atkins seeks to relieve the tedium of his detention at Pretoria by playing football?

Well, all tastes are to be respected, though I am bound to confess that the flagrant professionalism of the Association game rather sticks in one's gullet, but it is a fine manly pastime, and Rugby football to my mind is a most fascinating thing to watch. I remember the late Mr. 'Bob' Grimston being taken late in life to see a Rugby football match for the first time. He looked on at the game in silence for a long time, and then said, 'I should like to have played that when I was young.'

Jan. 5.—To-day I helped to shoot the coverts at M—; the second time through, so we were restricted to 'cocks only;' and as a matter of course hens presented themselves in the proportion of about four to one. However, none of us, including fortunately our host, altogether respected either 'age or sex' when some specially fascinating rocketer presented herself; and I was reminded of the story of the undergraduate who, shooting with his father in the days when to kill a hen pheasant was an offence of the first magnitude, involving a fine of five shillings, shot eight in succession, and then handing his infuriated parent a five-pound note, informed him he 'would take another three pounds' worth at the next covert'!

Jan. 10.—Walking home this afternoon I fell in with Mr. Tiplady, a small farmer who has recently settled in these parts. He bears the reputation of being rather a cantankerous kind of gentleman, and is usually at variance with his neighbours; but to-day he entered freely into conversation, under the delusion, I think, that he would obtain some sound legal advice gratis. It is no doubt flattering, but equally inexplicable, how people in his class persist in crediting a magistrate with a knowledge of the law: one would have thought that experience must have taught them better by now. However, Mr. Tiplady proceeded to lay his griefs before me at considerable length, though I had some difficulty in following him through the maze of his rhetoric, as, when he warmed to his subject, his speech—he hails from the north-east of England—became well-nigh incomprehensible. It appears that he suffers much at the hands of a certain Johnson, who, he alleges, wishes to establish a right of way across his farm. Matters seem to have come to a head

between them yesterday, but the account of this is best given in Mr. Tiplady's own words.

'Sae, ar sez tee him, Johneson, ar sez, ef thou cooms on mar land agean ar'l fell[1] thee.'

'Well,' I asked, 'and what did he say to that?'

'Saay!' retorted the indignant Tip, 'wye, he said nout, but joost ganned doon lonning *tappey-lappey*,' which being interpreted means that Johnson made no reply, but ran away down a lane as fast as his legs could carry him.

'Tappey-Lappey' is new to me, and, I venture to think, distinctly good. I wonder if any of my readers can enlighten me as to its etymology? Many of us will doubtless remember that Mr. Puffington's famous chestnut horse, on which he so gallantly led the 'Walters,' was called Tappey-Lappey.

But seriously, since we cannot all adopt such heroic measures as Mr. Tiplady, I cannot but think that the law of trespass in England—in Scotland I believe it to be far more stringent—needs some amendment. At present, unless a land-owner or farmer is able to prove wilful damage—not always the easiest of matters—he is practically powerless to prevent persons from trespassing on his land. One of the most fertile sources of trespass is the search for mushrooms, blackberries, and wildflowers; a benevolent judicature having decided that such things are not the property of the person on whose land they grow. On what grounds they can be held to belong to any one else, I confess, passes my humble comprehension. It cannot surely be claimed that they are without value. A stroll down a London street in springtime would refute this as far as wildflowers are concerned; while the marketable worth of such things as blackberries or mushrooms surely needs no demonstration: a farmer in my neighbourhood told me he sold twelve pounds' worth of mushrooms off his farm a year or two ago.

But it is not so much the mere value of a few mushrooms or hazel-nuts that is so annoying; it is the damage—often, I admit, unintentional—done by those who come to steal them. Gates are left open, to the injury, and even destruction, of valuable stock; gaps are established in hedges which it has perhaps taken years of care and attention to bring to maturity; and a gentleman (or more often, I am afraid, a lady) who would scorn to take a rose from your garden, or an apple from your orchard, will coolly descend on to another's land and dig up and carry away hampers-full of such flowers as lilies-of-the-

[1] *Anglicé*, 'Knock you down.'

valley or daffodils; while the fact that the scene of their marauding operations may be full of the nests of breeding pheasants does not act as the slightest deterrent.

Jan. 15.—Dined to-night with the C.s. It is the fashion to decry country dinner parties, and I confess that there are times when the prospect of a long drive in frosty weather prompts me to suggest a refusal of invitations to such gaieties; but Belinda, who is an ardent supporter of all forms of social amenities, sternly puts a veto on such faintheartedness. Like all good housewives, she takes a keen interest in the performances of her friends' cooks—from a purely culinary and not gastronomical standpoint—and when, as not infrequently happens, the vaulting ambition of these artists overleaps itself, she views the situation in much the same spirit of equanimity as we read of a Russian reverse in Central Asia, or as Sir William Harcourt would receive the news that Mr. Chamberlain's orchids had been nipped by the frost.

To my mind, however, the introduction of the post-prandial cigarette has robbed the country dinner party of one of its chief terrors; and I look back with a shudder to the days when, with a palate simply craving for tobacco, one was forced to sit drinking wine one did not want, with a prospect of two hours of bad whist or worse music, before relief could be obtained. There is still one house in this neighbourhood, at which we occasionally dine, where our host sternly refuses to allow smoking in his dining-room, a fact rendered all the more galling by his own indulgence in *snuff* as soon as the ladies have left the room. It must seem well-nigh incredible to the youth of the present generation that there was a time, not so very distant either, when smokers in country houses were treated as a species of Ishmaelite, only allowed to indulge in their vicious habits in kitchens and servants' halls after the legitimate occupants of those regions had retired for the night.

Last night, of course, the talk was all of the war: all the usual topics of a country dinner-table, the machinations of the County Council or the Clothing Club, the doings of the hounds, the contents of the last box of books from Mudie's, and the shortcomings of servants, were entirely forgotten for the one subject which now engrosses us all.

By the way, the Rector told us an interesting story of one of the officers killed at Glencoe, which reminded me of the article on 'Curious Recoveries,' by Lady Middleton, which appeared in one of the early numbers of this magazine. I

give the story as it was told, slightly altering dates and localities. Some years ago the officer in question, a subaltern in a smart Hussar regiment, whom we call M., received a legacy of a ring, a single diamond of no great value, mounted in an old-fashioned 'claw' setting. Shortly afterwards M., then quartered at York, was walking with some brother officers by the side of the Ouse, which was running bank high after a winter flood. The conversation turned on swimming, and after some discussion, M., with the inherent love of the British subaltern for dangerous exploits, undertook for a trifling wager to swim the river in his clothes. This he succeeded in doing, and as soon as he landed on the opposite bank of course ran straight back to the cavalry barracks to change his wet clothes, when he found he had lost his ring. With but faint hope of ever seeing it again, he issued a handbill offering a reward for its restoration, and within a week it was brought to him, having been found by an angler, actually lying in the mud and shallow water of the river edge. This I will call Recovery No. 1.

A year later M. was in, not sleepy old York, but New York, and coming home late one night from the theatre he found, on going to bed, that the stone had dropped out of its setting. To recover this would have seemed perfectly hopeless to most people, but, nothing daunted, M. inserted an advertisement in the papers, with the result that the tiny gem *was* returned to him, picked up by an honest man in a car of the Elevated Railway. Recovery No. 2.

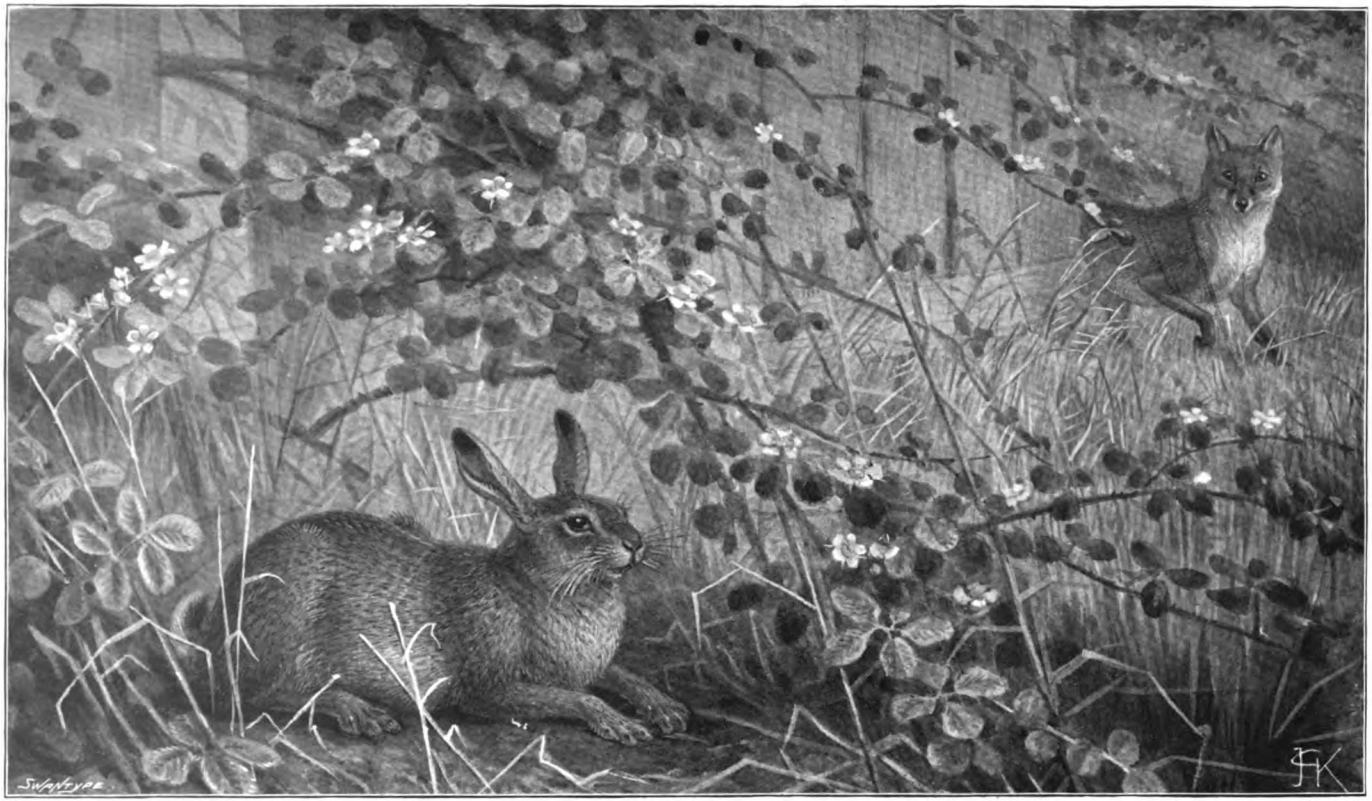
M. had the stone reset, and for several years it safely attended its master's fortunes in various parts of the world. Then, quartered in India, he was suddenly ordered on active service in Afghanistan. He had been campaigning for some time, when noticing that the stone appeared loose in its setting, he prised it out, and sealing it up in an envelope on which he wrote his name and regiment, placed it in his haversack. Very early one morning the troop of Bengal Lancers to which he was temporarily attached was suddenly ordered on reconnaissance duty, and, hurriedly departing, left their temporary camp to be struck by a handful of native followers. This was an opportunity not thrown away on the tribesmen of the vicinity, who, waiting until the soldiers were safely away, descended on the camp, and after butchering every soul in it, naturally looted everything they could lay hands on. It was not until the news of this reached him that M. remembered he had left his haversack behind in camp!

Soon afterwards peace was concluded with the turbulent Afridis, and M. returned to India, where he still continued to wear his ring with its empty setting. When asked, as he frequently was, why he did not get this filled with another stone, he would placidly reply, 'Because I am waiting for my diamond to come back to me.' Months passed away, and it did—by registered post! A sergeant of Highlanders, in command of a detachment employed in road making in the very valley where the camp had been looted, actually found the haversack at the bottom of a *khud*, where it had presumably been cast by an Afridi, who had rifled it of all its contents *except* the envelope containing the diamond. M.'s name was still faintly legible on this, and the sergeant sent it down unopened to Peshawur, whence it was forwarded to him in the manner described. Recovery No. 3, which I venture to think the most extraordinary of all.

I wonder whether the diamond still clings to its owner's finger where he lies, with other brave men, on the slopes of Talana Hill, or whether it has gone to adorn the grimy hand of some Boer vrouw on the far-away African Veldt?

Jan. 21.—To-day being Sunday I walked in the afternoon to ask after—or, as we say in these parts, 'for'—old James, who has been laid up with rheumatism, and was glad to find him better and able to walk about his cottage. In the course of conversation he informed me that he would never be well of his ailment until he had been 'well stung wi' bees'! Curiously enough, this is the second person who within the last year has said the same thing to me, and I believe it is a well accepted belief of the labouring classes in this district that to allow yourself to be thoroughly inoculated with the poison of the sting of bees is a complete and lasting antidote to rheumatism. I wonder if the same idea prevails in other parts of England, and what grounds there are for the belief? It is certainly an heroic remedy, and I have not yet come across any one who has voluntarily submitted to the treatment.

Walking home along a quiet lane I became interested in a little zoological comedy which but for me would probably have developed into a tragedy. Stopping to fill my pipe, I noticed a hare that was feeding under a very thick fence at the foot of a steep little hill or bank, and presently remarked that the hare had another interested observer in the shape of a fox, who was watching it from some little distance with evident felonious intent. Neither animal was aware of my presence, and it was amusing



AN INTERESTED OBSERVER

to watch the careful way in which the fox thought out its plan of attack. It could not approach the hare unseen from its present position, so after much careful examination of the ground it noiselessly slipped away, evidently intending to make a circuit and come down on its quarry from behind. Realising this, as soon as it had disappeared I threw a pebble at the hare, which departed incontinently. Very soon, as I had expected, the fox appeared creeping and crawling over the shoulder of the little hill. The thick fence at the foot of this prevented it from seeing that the hare had gone, so it wormed its way silently down the slope, and presently popped through the fence on to the very spot where the hare had been feeding, and which it must have marked with the most extraordinary accuracy.

I have rarely seen a human being, and certainly never an animal, look so thoroughly disconcerted as this fox when it found its supper had departed. (I was within fifty yards of it all the time.) It looked plaintively round with an air that said as plainly as if it had spoken, 'Now, I could have sworn there was a hare here;' then it took a cast round—exactly like a retriever hunting for a wounded bird—until it came on the line of the hare, which it only followed for a yard or two, recognising, no doubt, in some mysterious way that it had left at full speed, and was not worth following. The fox then sat down to reflect on the mutability of vulpine wishes, scratched its ear for a moment, and finally giving itself a philosophical shake as much as to say, 'Well, old boy, you are sold this time, but after all I daresay the hare was a tough old Jack only fit for jugging,' it trotted straight down to the gate where I was standing. It never saw me, and I allowed it to come within four or five yards of me, when I popped my head over the top of the gatepost and said 'Bo!' and in two seconds that fox had vanished as completely as if the earth had swallowed it up.

The extraordinary smoothness and rapidity with which a fox can disappear is, as far as my limited experience goes, only equalled by one other wild animal—the elk. I have stood within forty yards of a huge bull-elk in a Scandinavian forest, waiting for it to move so as to give me a clear shot, and suddenly a side puff of wind has brought the great brute knowledge of my vicinity, and it has vanished so suddenly, so instantaneously, that it seemed hard to believe that it had ever been there. This, too, in timber so dense that one would hardly have thought a rabbit could move unheard; and yet these monstrous deer,

weighing anything up to three-quarters of a ton, slip through such places as noiselessly as ghosts.

Jan. 22.—To-day Jack dined and slept the night here. He is very sore that his regiment has not been ordered to South Africa, but, I take it, finds some small compensation for the loss of his chance of being shot in trying to break his neck by hunting four days a week on £30 screws. He has lately been hunting in Southern ——shire, where the hunting fields are largely augmented by gentlemen from the great manufacturing towns of that district. Recently, in the course of a slow dragging run, hounds crossed a field of seeds, which of course the main body of the hunt refrained from riding over. Two gentlemen, however, who up till then had not shown very prominently in the van of the chase, apparently thought this verdant expanse of sward a Heaven-sent excuse for a gallop, and spurted across it in gallant fashion. On the far side they were met by Lord B., the M.F.H., a somewhat choleric gentleman, who addressed them at some length and with considerable vigour on the enormity of their offence. The culprits received his rebuke in silence, but when his back was turned, one of them, in a deeply injured voice, remarked, for the benefit of the bystanders, that he ''ad 'unted with many packs of 'ounds, but had never before been sworn at for crossing a *grass field*.' Truly a little knowledge is a dangerous thing!

Jan. 28.—Greatly as hotels have improved of late years in England, in some country towns landlords still follow the bad old ways and it is impossible for a traveller to obtain decent food. To-day, having business at X., the chief town of a neighbouring county, I sought some lunch in the leading hotel of the place, an imposing-looking building. Here in a coffee-room, even at this season of the year haunted with crawling flies, I interviewed a German waiter in a last week's shirt. The only hot viands available, he informed me, were kidney soup and shoulder of mutton, but a whiff of these delicacies which I had caught on entering the hotel not tempting me to a closer acquaintance with them, I asked for some cold meat, and was given my choice of a very dry attenuated fowl, a moist pale ham, and the half-raw remains of some ribs of beef. I selected the latter, which was presently served me on an egg- and mustard-stained tablecloth, together with two solitary waxy potatoes and a slab of bilious-looking cabbage in dirty pewter dishes. The heel of a stale loaf, some dubious butter much mangled by the knives of previous lunchers, two sticks of celery in a tumbler of foul

A PIED THRUSH

water, and a Cheddar cheese from America completed my repast, which I washed down with a whisky and soda. For this I was charged three shillings and sixpence plus a *douceur* to the waiter, who, by way of improving my appetite, passed a dirty napkin over each plate that he handed to me.

Now, X. is by no means an insignificant place; it is the capital of its county; it contains some thirty thousand inhabitants and returns a Member to Parliament; it is the centre of a large agricultural and industrial district; and one would imagine that in a place of such size, and at such a charge, one would obtain food which, however plain, was at least palatable and decently served.

Nor is this an exceptional case; the above may be taken as an every-day instance of the catering provided for the casual visitor in not a few English provincial towns; and I fancy that the experience of most of my readers will coincide with mine. As I walked up to the railway station on my way home, I mentally contrasted the meal of which I had just partaken with the one which, a year or two ago, I obtained at the little Pyrenean village of Argelès, where Belinda and myself unexpectedly arrived one fine February day. As we drove up to the little village inn, the landlord himself met us at the door, and in answer to our demand for immediate food—we were ravenously hungry—begged for twenty minutes in which to prepare it. This was the lunch with which he supplied us at the end of that time, the whole, be it noted, perfectly cooked and served. Fresh trout; neat little cutlets and *pommes soufflées;* an appetising dish of chicken *a l'Espagnole;* a woodcock—*parlez-moi d'ça* —and an omelette *aux fines herbes;* the whole topped up with delicious crêpes, pastry, and a fragrant little cream cheese. Two sorts of rough country wine were included gratis, and afterwards I had such a cup of coffee as I have never tasted in any London club, and the usual *petit verre.* The total of the bill amounted to nine francs, or exactly as much per head as I was charged for my indigestible meal at X., while the neat waitress was so charmed with the exceedingly modest tip that I bestowed on her, that as we drove away she appeared with an enormous bunch of violets which she presented to the delighted Belinda.

We may be a nation of shopkeepers, but when I contrast these two meals I cannot help wishing that our commercial instincts had been leavened by a little culinary taste.

Jan. 30.—To dine and sleep at J.'s, where we had the last shoot of the season, though I hope to kill some duck and wood-

pigeons next month. I saw a pied thrush, a thing I do not remember to have come across before.

At dinner the conversation turned on the abuse of the term 'gentleman' (our housemaid recently informed Belinda she was engaged to be married to a 'gentleman' at Nottingham—who on inquiry turned out to be a bookmaker's clerk), and we were all asked to define what in our opinion constituted the outward and visible sign of a gentleman. A youth from one of the Universities who was present maintained that 'properly cleaned boots stamped a man as such.' I quoted Whyte-Melville—'a man who has dress clothes;' but I think the best definition was our host's—'a man who eats currant-jelly with his mutton.'

I suppose every one has his own ideas on the subject. Some years ago I was talking to an old Cumberland keeper, who had recently left his native dale for the first time in his life to visit a married daughter in one of the great Yorkshire manufacturing towns—Leeds or Sheffield, I forget which. 'Fowk mun be tarrible rich theer,' he said, 't' lads in t' streets was arl like gentlemen, smoking meershoom pipes.'

This must surely be the most marketable form of gentility, superior even to Baronetcies.

GOLF IN 1899

BY H. S. C. EVERARD

As in 1898, so in 1899, the centre of golfing interest, in view of his absolutely unique career, has been Harry Vardon; the 'L'état c'est moi' of Louis XIV. might find parallel expression in the mouth of the Grand Monarque of the Royal and Ancient game did not his modesty forbid the utterance. But while the Champion, as is meet, is the centre of the system, other luminaries there are, greater or lesser lights, who are also worthy of our observation. It is proposed, therefore, briefly to glance at some of the more important events of the bygone year. Golf, in the Midland counties, is now to all appearance no less an institution than in the Kingdom of Fife itself, and of its various professional exponents quartered here, there and everywhere about the centre of England, there are some who have already given indication of a more than average share of ability. Thus, J. Sherlock, who instructs the Oxford undergraduate to very good purpose, accomplished a fine performance in February at King's Norton, where, in a field of twenty-six players, he gave in a total of 148—72 and 76, winning by six strokes from A. Toogood, and by twelve strokes from David Brown, the Musselburgh Champion of 1886. Among those taking part in this competition was Tom Williamson, of Nottingham, who on this occasion was fifth; later in the year, however, he acquitted himself so well that good judges see in him a very probable Open Champion in the future. But perhaps a necessary preliminary to this would be, in accordance with Taylor's useful suggestion, the establishment of a close time for Vardon; or Vardon might be induced to officiate as

referee at a football match, or otherwise disable himself; failing which, it is not easy to see how, or by whom, he is to be deposed from his present position of unquestioned supremacy. The Champion himself has recorded his high opinion of the young Notts professional, whose first round in the Open Championship was 76; he thus gave evidence that English golfers are recruiting their ranks, and making it increasingly difficult for Scottish professionals to hold their own in those annual trials of strength in which Messrs. Hilton, John Ball, jun., and J. H. Taylor, to say nothing of Vardon himself, have borne such a distinguished part in the past. Williamson was born at Grantham in 1880, and, with the exception of three

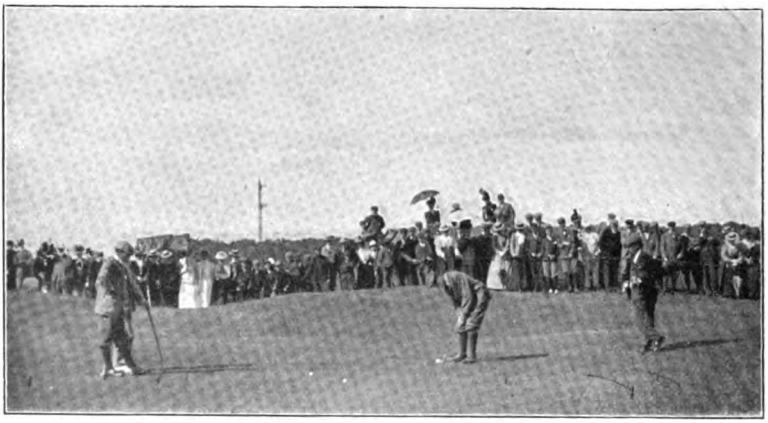


Photo by] VARDON PUTTING [*Major How*

months spent at North Berwick, has lived in Nottingham since 1884. In 1898 he began to show ability of a marked order, for in an exhibition match with Sandy Herd, although being five down and fourteen to play, he nevertheless succeeded in halving the match. In October 1899, at Bulwell, Notts, he made a splendid fight with Vardon, to whom he only yielded on the last green, beaten two holes in a thirty-six-hole match. About a month later, after reducing the record of his own green from 71 to 69, he accomplished a great performance in beating Sandy Herd by two holes over Herd's own green at Huddersfield. A victory in a professional competition at Handsworth also stands to his credit; score 160: all which details, therefore, seem to confirm the view that Williamson is one of the best, if not the best, of the younger generation, and that his first round in the Cham-

pionship, in which he finished ninth, was no mere flash in the pan.

The Spring Meetings of the more important clubs were of interest, as affording a general sort of idea as to the fettle of the leading players, who were shortly to meet in the Amateur Championship. Among the first to take the field were the Honourable Company at Muirfield, where Mr. J. E. Laidlay won with 85, not, however, without being hard pressed by Mr. A. D. Blyth, 86, whose happy hunting-grounds are at Sandwich rather than the Lothian Green, which he seems to visit but seldom. But if the scoring here was nothing remarkable, the same cannot be said of the meetings at Lytham and St. Anne's, and at Hoylake. When fairly on the war-path, it seems impossible to stop Messrs. Hilton and John Ball, jun. We are told by the old Danish historian, Saxo Grammaticus, that the Finns, in order to elude pursuit by their enemy, Arngrim, used to throw behind them three pebbles, which waxed amain and increased in size amazingly, until they became, or appeared to become, three mighty and impassable mountains. Similarly, on the Lancashire links, the balls teed by Messrs. John Ball, jun., and Hilton—and, to complete the parallel, we must add Mr. John Graham, jun.—prove insurmountable obstacles to the success of anybody else. No lack, mark you, of good players on these greens in the neighbourhood of Liverpool; but so surely as ever they fare forth in pursuit of the elusive medal, just so certain is it that one or other of the trio above named, or perhaps all three, interpose between them and the

Photo by] FINISH OF VARDON'S SWING *[W. H. Fowler, Esq.*

goal obstacles insuperable, like the magic pebbles. It is really rather hard. Here is Mr. Hilton at Lytham Spring Meeting—first day, 75; miles in front of Mr. Ball, at least, six strokes, say a third (of a mile); second day, Mr. John Ball, jun., 75; five strokes in front of Mr. Hilton, who is second—also Mr. Ball, 75 + 5 = 80—wins the handicap prize as well as the ladies' gold medal. Somebody, for a wonder, did step in just in front of the pair for aggregate score, thanks to the weight they both carried; but even so only by one stroke, the two being even with 166, net; showing, however, that the handicappers knew what they were about.

A little later, having as a preliminary won the West Lancashire medal with 78, Mr. Hilton had an easy victory on the first day of the Hoylake Meeting. There was a high north-west wind, with occasional showers of rain, yet his score was but 75—38 out, 37 home; a truly great performance, and within a stroke or two of the record. Mr. Charles Hutchings secured second honours with 83.

On the second day Mr. Hilton again won, but was hard pressed by Mr. R. Gould, the old International football-player. So close was the scoring, that only two strokes separated the first four players: Mr. Hilton, 80; Mr. Gould, 81; Messrs. John Ball, jun., and J. Graham, jun., each 82. The last named, who is now on the same mark with Messrs. Ball and Hilton, returned a grand 75 for the monthly medal on the last day of the week. Mr. Gould won no less than five prizes in one day.

The Royal and Ancient honours were divided between Mr. F. G. Tait,[1] now (December) serving with his regiment in South Africa, and Mr. J. E. Laidlay, in the order named—with scores respectively of 80 and 84—this being the fourth time in succession that the winning score was 80. Thus, so far as these Spring Meetings afforded any indication of what was likely to

[1] Since the above was written the action at Magersfontein has been fought, and Mr. Tait has been wounded in the thigh. He was sent to hospital at Wynberg, whence he has telegraphed that he is 'doing famously.' All golfers will unite in wishing him a speedy recovery. In the same action his friend, Captain Macfarlane, also of the Black Watch, was killed. He was a brilliant golfer, well known at Carnoustie, where, with Mr. Tait as his partner, he often tackled Archie and Bob Simpson. On one occasion, January 30, 1898, at St. Andrews, the amateurs established a record for the last half-round on the right-hand side. Their full score was 78, the last half of which was 4 4 3 4 4 4 3 4 4 = 34, which has never yet been beaten. Captain Macfarlane learnt his golf at Loretto; he was an extremely long driver, and at cricket also a very hard hitter.—H. S. C. E.

happen in the approaching Amateur Championship, it was clear that Mr. Hilton was at his best, as indeed he almost always is, and that of Mr. Tait much the same might be said. Mr. Laidlay was apparently rather below his form, but for that very reason, as likely as not to render an excellent account of himself when the time came. Mr. Graham was certainly to be labelled 'dangerous,' while Mr. Ball, retiring modestly into the background, at any rate, over Hoylake, successfully veiled the surprise he intended to spring upon them all at Prestwick.

Meanwhile the Professionals had not been idle, and Vardon,

Photo by] ST. ANDREWS THIRD HOLE [*W. H Fowler, Esq.*
MARVELLOUS CLEEK SHOT FROM A BAD PLACE

as usual, monopolised the lion's share of the booty. The Great North of Scotland Railway Company having been at considerable expense in building an hotel, and laying out links at Cruden Bay, the leading professionals, without Taylor and Herd, however, were invited to play. Vardon, first in qualifying score, with 162, subsequently won both his matches, beating Archie Simpson by five and four to play, and, in the final, J. Kinnell by three and two. Probably amongst the best performances the Champion has ever done was that at Richmond, Mid-Surrey. We are told that he 'created something like consternation' by going out in 33; his first round was 70, or six better than anybody else; his second was 74; total 144; 11 strokes lower than Jack

White, who was second. But his subsequent play was nearly as good. After thus qualifying, he met and defeated in succession J. Braid, by one hole only, Sandy Herd by three and two, after magnificent play on both sides; and finally, J. Rowe. The Champion's rounds were, 70, 74, 76, 72, 77, 75—that is to say, an average of exactly 74 for the six rounds. What sort of play this means will be clear if we note the fact that, of the thirty-eight professionals, each of whom played two rounds on the first day, not one, save Vardon himself, touched 74—yet the field included every one of note save Park.

At Eastbourne, strange to say, the conquering hero experienced a slight reverse, and had for once to be content with second place. After qualifying by score (Taylor and Herd first

Photo by CROWD AT THE HIGH HOLE [*Major How*

with 153) he defeated Herd by two, but fell before Braid in the final; the Scotsman winning after a stubborn fight by two holes. The position was reversed a little later on at Porthcawl, where Vardon, Braid, Taylor and Herd finished in the order named; Vardon making a record with 72, Braid 75. Vardon had met Herd twice in exhibition matches, at Leicester and at Cleethorpes, and had won each time, while an excellent foursome, Vardon and Taylor against Braid and Herd, England *v.* Scotland, was twice won by the Champion and his partner at Mid-Surrey and at Porthcawl.

The Amateur Championship at Prestwick was prefaced by an interesting team match, now, as it seems, an annual fixture: Royal Liverpool Golf Club against Tantallon. For the Lancashire Club, Mr. Hilton, Mr. John Ball, jun., and Mr. John Graham, jun., led off, being opposed by Mr. F. G. Tait, Mr.

Laidlay, and Mr. R. Maxwell respectively. Mr. Tait beat Mr. Hilton by two (scores 77, 78), Mr. Laidlay beat Mr. Ball by two (scores 78, 80), but Mr. Graham beat Mr. Maxwell by two. The Tantallon Club won the match, both in the single and foursome play.

The Amateur Championship, played in May, produced, as was inevitable, some magnificent matches. Fate again dealt hardly with Mr. Hilton, who, after an extremely narrow escape from defeat at the hands of Mr. J. R. Gairdner, once more encountered Mr. F. G. Tait, and once more lost. And yet, of the two, Mr. Hilton played the better golf; after two strokes or three, as the case might be, he was almost invariably nearer to the hole than his antagonist; but the two mistakes he did make, both on the putting-green, were so absolutely bad that they more than neutralised his other advantages. Mr. Tait's short game, on the other hand, was of flawless excellence from start to finish; had it not been so, he must have been beaten, for he only defeated Mr. Hilton on the eighteenth green by the help of a half stymie. Mr. Tait was round in 78, Mr. Hilton in 80. Mr. Laidlay, who had accounted for Mr. John Graham in the second round, fell rather unexpectedly in the fourth, being beaten by Mr. J. M. Williamson. Mr. John Ball had a very close match with Mr. R. Maxwell, who, it may be remembered, defeated him at Muirfield in 1897 after a halved match. Oddly enough, they halved again at Prestwick, but whereas at Muirfield they did not settle the question till the twenty-third hole, on the Ayrshire green the nineteenth hole saw the finish; 'where,' as one report rather unkindly said, 'the Englishman sent home for once his short putt.' 'For once' is quite good, expressive, and true; for surely no man ever did win a big prize before, and miss so many short putts in the process. These sorrows seemed to come to him 'not single spies but in battalions,' especially in the first round of the final against Mr. F. G. Tait. While Mr. Ball had the whip-hand of Mr. Maxwell most of the way round—four up at one time; three up, four to play at another—Mr. Tait, on the other hand, had the whip-hand of him—principally by reason of the short putts missed as aforesaid, by Mr. Ball, who at one time was as many as five down, and started on his last round three down, eighteen to play.

Mr. Hilton, meanwhile, had expounded the proper theory of putting to his compatriot, and with such success that the short putts for the most part all went in. Mr. Tait's game was

a long way below his best, wild from the tee towards the finish, but redeemed every now and again by a shot of extraordinary brilliancy. Such a shot was played out of water six inches deep at the 17th hole; and another, whereby Mr. Tait halved the match, was his putt at the eighteenth green; Mr. Ball having been dormy one. At the deciding hole, after an exceptionally long drive, twenty yards in front of Mr. Tait, the Hoylake champion laid his approach stone dead, and so won his fifth Amateur Championship, after a splendid match, in which the alternating vicissitudes were remarkable. Mr. Ball does not seem to have played any round at a very low figure; his putting was too uncertain; but then he had nothing above

Photo by] MR. J. E. LAIDLAY PUTTING [*Major How*

80, or 81 at the outside; a steady level of excellence difficult to beat. That he could afford to give away so many short putts is an eloquent testimony as to the rest of his game. Apart from the acknowledged leaders, Mr. J. R. Gairdner, Mr. John Graham, jun., Mr. R. Maxwell, and Mr. Frederick M'Kenzie seem very possible champions of the future; all are endowed with great driving power, and have been golfers from their youth up, with, however, an interregnum of twelve years in the case of Mr. Gairdner, who is at a considerable disadvantage in age as compared with the other three. But every Amateur Championship produces fine players in abundance, wherefore anything in the nature of prophecy would seem to be like Purgatory, a fond thing vainly invented.

The preliminary to the Open Championship at Sandwich

was the St. George's Vase, won by Mr. F. G. Tait with two rounds of 76, 79 = 155; seven strokes below any former winning score. For the Open Event Harry Vardon was undoubtedly the favourite, and well did he justify the opinion of his supporters. In his second round his first ten holes, sensational enough as they actually were, were within but a little of being more sensational still. Starting with five fours, in each instance he had putts of but four feet or a little over for threes. At the Maiden he had a three with a four yard putt for a two; then followed a four, a two, and a four. At the tenth hole, he had a raking drive, and a similar brassy shot, which he laid within a foot of the hole. He thus holed the first ten holes in 36. It is bewildering to think that with really good putting this might well have been reduced by several strokes. The last part of this round was not up to the same standard; nevertheless he finished in 76, a replica of his forenoon's score; with 81 and 77 the next day he won the Championship with plenty to spare. Jack White, with a brilliant 75 in his last round, made a record for the green,

Out . 3 4 3 4 4 3 6 3 4 = 34
Home 6 4 5 5 4 5 4 4 4 = 41 } = 75,

and took second place with 315; Andrew Kirkaldy third, 319. Vardon's score was sixteen strokes better than that of Taylor when he won in 1894, and the first eight were also below 326; but without doubt the course was easier, though the play probably also reached a higher standard.

Not for many years has a professional match aroused such interest as that for £200 between Vardon and Willie Park, the first half of which was played at North Berwick in July. Just previously, in the Championship, Park's rounds on the first day had been exceedingly good, but on the second day he went all to pieces; the question therefore was, would he be likely to play his best against such a man as Vardon; and even if he did, would it avail him anything in the end? Before a crowd which some estimates put as high as 8000 people, the match began; and interesting enough it proved. Park was always far outdriven in the long game, and had therefore more difficult shots to play on to the green, but, on the other hand—at any rate for the first half of the round—he holed out, almost whenever he could see the hole at all; this part of his game was really miraculous, and, thanks to this, the first ten holes were halved; for had the Champion holed out in like manner he would have had a very

great advantage, but he seemed quite unable to turn his superior long game to good use, or hole a putt of four feet in length. In spite of this, however, his two rounds totalled but 160—80 each, and at the end of the day he had a lead of two holes. When, a fortnight later, he had the advantage of playing on his own green at Ganton, he fairly crushed Park, and won by eleven up and ten to play. In August he played a series of exhibition matches on various greens in Scotland, visiting Troon, Luffness, Elie, Leven, Nairn, St. Andrews, and Barnton, and beating all the local professionals, including Fernie, Sayers, and J. Kinnell, one after the other. At St. Andrews, however, the match was against the best ball of Mr. Laidlay and Mr. Leslie Balfour Melville, the amateurs winning by two holes in the thirty-six. At Barnton, playing similarly against Mr. Josiah Livingston and Mr. J. M. Williamson, Vardon was in marvellous form; Park had just previously reduced the record of the green to 74, yet Vardon's first round was 72, and his second 70; the amateurs, who lost by five in the thirty-six, scored 75 and 73. Morning and afternoon Vardon drove the 16th and 17th holes, each over 500 yards, in two, and holed out in four.

In an open tournament in September at Portmarnock, Vardon again produced that 'extra special' class of game with which he has now familiarised us, heading the list with a qualifying score of 151 (72 and 79). In the subsequent play he was perfectly irresistible; he defeated Herd by two and one to play after a fight that was the prominent feature of the meeting, going round in 70 to Herd's 74, and in the final against Taylor, thirty-six holes, he won by thirteen up and eleven to play—these two rounds costing him but 71 and 69; the latter, of course, a record.

Out .	4 3 5 4 4 4 3 4 4 = 35	= 69.
Home	4 3 3 4 4 5 5 2 4 = 34	

In the final of the Amateur tournament, Mr. John Ball, jun., defeated Mr. J. M. Williamson, who had previously disposed of Mr. Hilton; the latter in the course of the competition established an amateur record, 75; 38 out, 37 home. It is probable that Mr. John Ball never played better than in the month of October, at Lytham, Hoylake, and Leasowe. In successive competitions his cards showed 74 (a record)—77, 77, 78, 75, 73, 73; at Hoylake, however, on the second day, Mr. Hilton beat him with 76, and Mr. John Graham, jun., tied with Mr. Ball, but lost on playing off. The Royal and Ancient Autumn

Medal was won by Mr. F. G. Tait with 83, Mr. J. E. Laidlay second with 84, after a tie with Mr. W. D. Bovill, Mr. W. H. Fowler, and Mr. W. A. Henderson. Mr. Tait also carried off the Glennie Medal with 163, and the Calcutta Cup. Thus, in virtue of his general play, although he just failed to win the Amateur Championship, his reputation may be said to stand even higher than before. We may note that he headed the list of amateurs in the Open Championship, and that in the autumn he defeated Mr. John Ball, jun., by one hole in thirty-six, in a private match at Lytham and St. Anne's. Mr. H. C. Ellis, the young Oxford player, who has had a most successful year, won the Jubilee Vase, in the course of which he exhibited some mag-

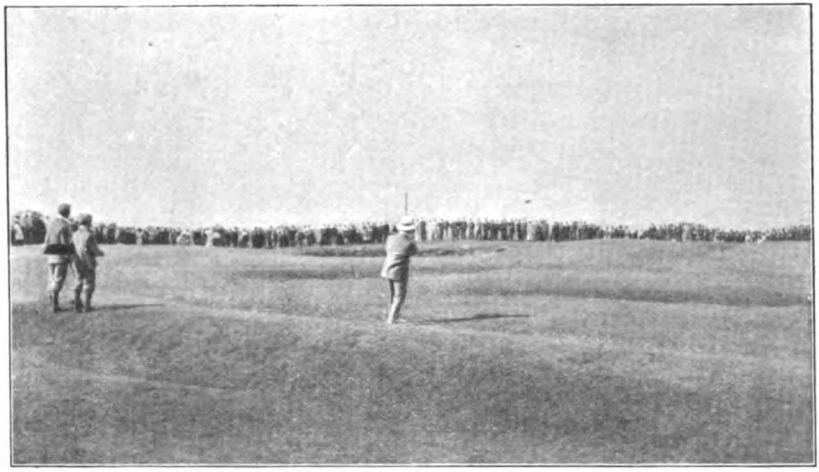


Photo by] MR. LESLIE BALFOUR MELVILLE APPROACHING [*Major How*

nificent play. It will be seen that the Open and Amateur Champions have played well up to their reputations ; probably no man has ever before gone through a whole year's golf with so few reverses as Vardon—they may be counted on the fingers of one hand—Braid beat him at Eastbourne, Herd at Trafford, Taylor twice, at Newquay and Westward Ho, and halved at Brancaster ; while Vardon lost a best of balls match at St. Andrews. That is a marvellous record, including as it does stroke competitions as well as match play. For the rest, it remains to say that the Rules Revision Committee finished their somewhat arduous labours in the autumn, with the result that golfers now have a code which all seem to agree, whatever its shortcomings, is a considerable improvement upon its predecessors. By an unaccountable oversight, however, the

following case, submitted for opinion to a contemporary, seems not to be explicitly provided for: A. and B. are partners against C. and D. A. is a long driver, B. a very poor driver. A. openly advises B. to miss the globe at every tee shot; the advice is followed; C. and D. protest, but in vain.

The game proceeds under these conditions; C. and D. arrive on a putting green, having played several more, perhaps five or six. C. is suspected of relieving his pent-up feelings by taking a pot-shot at B.'s caddie, whom he successfully 'snipes'; the caddie was standing at the hole for him. C. will neither admit nor deny the impeachment. What happens?

Who shall say that this was not a thoroughly sportsmanlike match?

(*Photo by Ven. Archdeacon Donne*)

SPECTATORS AT ST. ANDREWS. 'A COIGN OF VANTAGE.'

GOING TO THE MEET

FOX HUNTING ROUND ROME

BY DANIELE B. VARÉ

THE Roman Campagna, the vast undulating plain that stretches from the base of the snow-capped Apennines to the shores of the Tirrean Sea, a plain covered with the ruins of a long-dead empire and traversed in all directions by the great marble aqueducts that for more than twenty centuries have brought water to the Eternal City : such is our hunting country.

Here, twice or three times a week, a long line of cabs and dog-carts, trotting briskly in the early morning between the old, ivy-covered Roman tombs that border the Appian Way, brings to one or another of the various meets a small crowd of pink coats, officers, and ladies, all as keen for a long run after a good fox as any of the lucky sportsmen who hunt with the Quorn and the Pytchley, with the Belvoir or the Duke of Beaufort's hounds.

Foxes are plentiful on the Campagna, and the going is generally good, as a hard frost is very rare and during the season there is plenty of rain. Though stiff timber—*staggionate*—and stone walls are very numerous, the wire fences that have so

seriously affected sport in England are almost unknown; grass also, which, according to Whyte-Melville, is the one essential that constitutes pre-eminence in a hunting country, is abundant with us. In the great expanse of yellowish, thyme-scented pastures that stretch for miles upon miles to the north and west of the town, ploughed enclosures are few and far between.

Probably no pack in Europe is followed by so cosmopolitan a field; besides a large number of Italian gentlemen and officers, the attachés and secretaries of nearly all the embassies are to be met riding more or less good horses to hounds on a

A FRESH DRAW

hunting morning: well groomed, well mounted Englishmen, tall, bearded Russians, Americans, Germans, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Austrians, dark, handsome young Brazilians, and sometimes even Turks or Egyptians. Foreigners, I know, are in the habit of hunting a great deal in Great Britain; but, as the packs are so numerous, one rarely sees more than two or three different nations represented at a meet in the shires. In Italy there is really only one regular pack of foxhounds, though stag hunting is frequent in the northern provinces.

The most generous subscriber to the Roman pack is his Majesty King Humbert; and his nephew, H.R.H. the Count of Turin, is one of the most daring and skilful horsemen and the truest lover of good sport that the country can show. Several

times last year he hunted the pack, in the absence of the Master, the Marquis di Roccagiovane, with a skill that many an English M.F.H. might envy.

Perhaps no scene in modern English life can boast the picturesqueness of a meet of fox or stag hounds; in Italy an additional touch of bright colour is offered by the officers' uniforms, for here, as in nearly every other country on the Continent, the officers always wear their uniform. The long sky-blue cloaks, and the black, silver, and blue tunics of the cavalry regiments, the black and gold of the artillery, the pink coats, the smart grey and black habits of the ladies, all contrasting strangely with the rough green *mantelli* and goat-skin breeches of the Campagna shepherds, who invariably crowd round the meets to gaze in wonder at the horses and their riders: all this under the deep blue of an Italian sky, with the great, silent Campagna and the distant Alban hills for a background, forms a picture that once seen can never be forgotten by the many strangers who drive out from the town to see a Roman *appuntamento di caccia*.

Nearly all the Italian hunting men get their horses in England and Ireland, so that nearly every horse one sees out hunting has English blood in him. Sardinia is famous for its ponies, and a great many horses are bred in Italy itself; but, without that strain of English blood in them, they are generally too small to hunt, though their facility for climbing and their extraordinary staying powers render them singularly useful as light-cavalry horses in a mountainous country such as ours. It takes an English hunter several months to get used to the climate and to the Italian *staggionate* and stone walls. A *staggionata* is a very different thing from an English timber fence, for, although often very high, it is never built of more than three bars, which are set very far apart. The walls are made of large pieces of a brown, soft stone, called *tufa*, generally without cement. They are often very stiff jumping, being both broad and high, and, though I have never been in Ireland, I imagine they must be very similar to the stone walls in the Emerald Isle, for I have noticed that both the Campagna ponies and the hunters brought from Ireland surmount these impediments by the process called, I believe, 'changing' by the Irish, and described by Whyte-Melville in his 'Riding Recollections.'

There are no hedges in the Campagna and no brooks, though sometimes a broad dry ditch has to be cleared with a rush. The entire absence of anything in the way of a hedge is,

in fact, one of the principal characteristics of the country; rather a negative characteristic, the reader will observe, but one that has the effect of making the size and difficulty of an obstacle always quite clear to both rider and horse. One might be inclined to think that this circumstance would render the riding in the Campagna unusually straight; but personally I think it has an entirely contrary effect. Many a youthful sportsman will ride boldly at a stiff jump if the danger be hidden from his gaze by a thick hedge; but if he is at all deficient in pluck, the sight of a strong, clean *staggionata*

A STAGGIONATA

—approximate height, five foot three—will remind him that discretion is the better part of valour.

Even the most distant meets round Rome take place at a rendezvous that is generally less than an hour and a half's drive from the town, and this, although an undoubted advantage to the hunting men and ladies, renders the meets also easily accessible to a large number of photographers, cyclists, and strangers, mostly American or English, who seem to consider the whole affair as a show got up especially for their benefit.

I shall never forget the expression of ill-disguised astonishment and contempt on the face of the huntsman at the sight of a rather pretty American girl in a large hat, who was kneeling

in the grass with her arms round the neck of a very dignified old hound and calling out to a fond parent:

'Oh, momma, do come and look at this one! Isn't he just *too* cunning?'

Some of the pedestrians who frequent the meets are as unfailing in their attendance as the Master himself; such is Signor Sbijá, to whom I am indebted for the photographs that illustrate this article. As I have said already, foxes are numerous on the Campagna in spite of coverts being few and far between

OVER THE WALL

and the absence of any law or custom that prohibits the shooting of foxes; in fact, foxes' brushes are used by the Italian *buttari*, or keepers, to adorn the headgear of their cart-horses, together with feathers and bells. These decorations have, at least, the practical merit of keeping off the flies, besides the music-making and beautifying properties which have so endeared them to the hearts of the Roman cart drivers.

As for the fox, when alive, he makes his home among the ruins or in the caves that abound in the Campagna, and sometimes, penetrating a little deeper through the soft earth and *tufa*, he will find safe storage for his stolen provisions in that great,

silent city of the dead that we call the Catacombs, whose innumerable and almost unexplored roads and chapels undermine half Rome and the country round it. Here sometimes, when hard pressed, he will seek for safety, speeding down the long dark passages deeper and deeper into the bowels of the earth ; and even the terriers, frightened by the darkness and the sinister whirr of the great bats' wings above their heads, will not dare to follow.

As with everything else in Italy, so it is with sport : the spirit of poetry, which is inherent to the country, seems to

DOWN

surround it so much on every side that one is apt to forget all other characteristics. Yet ours is a good, healthy sport, that every Englishman would enjoy and that many Englishmen *do* enjoy, bringing their splendid hunters, and their skill in riding them, to a hunting country where long, hard frosts are unknown. If this country, besides richness in game and mildness of climate, can boast of an artistic and historical interest that has no equal, is this a fault and not rather an added merit ?

We do not pretend that our sport is equal to that enjoyed by our brother fox hunters in England ; the surroundings, so to speak, of the kennels are so different with us that it is almost impossible even to compare our habits and customs with yours. For instance, the time-honoured English custom of giving the

puppies to neighbouring farmers and sportsmen to 'walk' during the summer months, with all its attendant puppy shows and prize-givings, is unknown in Italy. Neither can we keep our horses, as is the custom with you, in summer: if a hunter is ever put out to grass he must be taken in again before the end of June, or else be fed entirely on corn, for the terrific heat of an Italian July and August will leave no grass worthy of the name on the parched, dusty fields. On the other hand, we have during the season some advantages that might gladden

A CONVENIENT FORD

the heart of the most crabbed old huntsman. Whilst in England your hunters are eating their heads off in the stables during a long frost, and everybody concerned is in a temper better imagined than described, with us the ground is at its best, and good fast runs the rule and not the exception. As yet, with us, no one has been stopped in a good run by the terrible 'Ware wire, sir!' and no willing brute has been pulled on to its haunches on nearing a hedge, among the sticks and foliage of which the hidden strands of metal gleam menacingly in the winter sunshine.

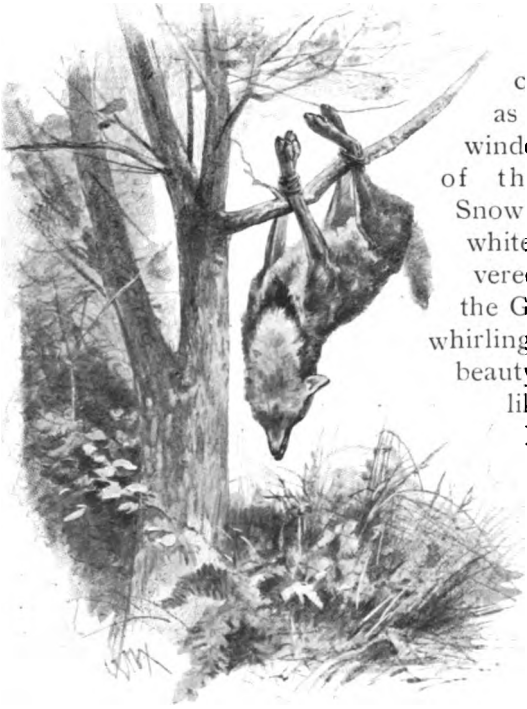
A peculiarity of our meets, which I must not forget to mention, is the refreshment tent, a stained and somewhat

weatherbeaten erection, which seems to be a source of much amusement to the English sportsmen who stop in Rome for a few days' hunting, The tent is really a great convenience, and is much patronised, especially after a hard day, when, the tired horses having been consigned to their grooms to be led slowly homewards, their riders can turn their attention to the fare provided and to the discussion of the events of the day.

I have read with great interest, in the English and continental newspapers of the last few days, of hunting men who have generously offered their horses to the Government for use in South Africa, and of Masters of Foxhounds who are leaving their homes, their work, and their pleasure to strike a blow for their country's sake with all the fine courage which true sport always engenders. Perhaps it may not seem out of place if I endeavour to express here some of the sympathy and admiration that I know all my country's sportsmen feel for these brave English gentlemen. It is not so very long ago that Italy saw the cream of her army and of her aristocracy start for a war in Africa from which few ever returned ; and it is in all sincerity that we wish every English officer, volunteer or trooper, all the honour and success ever attaching to the name of the great nation of whom he has proved himself a worthy and devoted son.

SHEEP IN WOLVES' CLOTHING

BY GUY CADOGAN ROTHERY



Two men, toying with the remains of a luncheon, sat disconsolate as they looked out of a window on the first floor of the Hôtel de France. Snow was falling fast. A white sheet of charity covered the ugly nakedness of the Grande Place, while the whirling flakes lent a mystic beauty to the wedding-cake-like ornamented Sub-Prefecture which faced the hotel.

Cuthbert Lovel and his American friend, Hannibal Y. Stringer, had been attracted to the little French Alpine frontier town of Apf by wolves. A hard winter had given the 'courage of despair' to the gaunt forest monsters, causing them to descend from their secluded haunts to such places as were frequented by

pigs, sheep, and fat village babies. The disappearance of small boys had alarmed a paternal Government, itself ever hungering after conscripts, and the daily toll levied on their four-footed flocks had caused the good peasants to clamour for assistance. As a result of local discontent and bureaucratic pressure, the Louvetier of the Department had proclaimed a general wolf hunt. This news had at once been transmitted to Lovel by a friend, the Comte Aimé de Belgarde, a local landlord. Cuthbert, without a moment's hesitation, decided to cast off the too persistent dust of Monte Carlo and join the fun. He took with him a stray citizen of the United States, whom he had chanced to pick up in that anteroom to warm regions, the Cercle de la Mediterranée at Nice. As they journeyed up, stories of recent cruel deeds of man-eating wolves had quickened their pulse, warmed their blood; then a steady snowfall threatened an indefinite postponement to M. le Louvetier's campaign.

'Courage, friends, it is going to freeze.'

'It is a frost already, Belgarde.' Lovel looked up gloomily as the new-comer flung himself noisily into the room.

M. de Belgarde wore a heavy green frock coat trimmed with fur, buckskin breeches, black boots reaching to above the knee, and a black velvet cap, and he sported a huge hunting-knife. He had been parading the town for weeks in this hereditary uniform, and was only outdone in splendour by the Louvetier, M. Garance de Beaujarret, and his three *piqueurs*. He was certain that a change in the weather was about to take place, and as soon as the snow was firm enough a start would be made. He proved to be quite right. The snow ceased and a sharp night's frost gave the desired hardness to the white shroud which lay on the land.

Early in the morning Lovel and Stringer were awakened by a weird blare of brazen hunting-horns and military bugles. Jumping hastily out of bed, they peered forth. A startling scene met their gaze. The square was filled with people; a number of soldiers stood with flaring torches, which shed a red glare on the houses and caused the white snow to sparkle brilliantly where it did not appear to be running with blood. Lit up by the fitful flames were to be seen the stern faces of men gathered together in all the panoply of *la chasse*. Hastily dressing, the two friends were knocked up by de Belgarde, who caused them to swallow a glass of red wine and a horrible mixture of anchovies, raw onions, and vinegar, 'to keep out the cold.'

They found the Louvetier—a pompous individual who prided

'A HARD WINTER CAUSED THEM TO DESCEND FROM THEIR SECLUDED HAUNTS

himself on his ancestry, though de Belgarde whispered that they were 'only lawyers'—surrounded by the Sub-Prefect, M. Adolphe Truc, a small man whose hectoring ways but ill concealed his constant nervous suspicion; Trichet, a fat captain of the infantry; the dapper, supercilious Lieutenant Le Roy de Berg, of the Chasseurs Alpins; the calm and observant M. Malfois Arebours, Secretary-General of the Prefecture; a few local landowners; and the hunt servants keeping in leash a number of tall, wiry hounds. A crowd of eager sightseers jostled with the torch-bearing soldiers and the gendarmes. All kinds of arms were carried by the hunters, from the express rifle to the old-fashioned muzzle-loader, while the hunt servants had serpentine brass horns round their bodies, pistols and hunting-knives. Day was just breaking as a start was made, the 'noble warriors' escorted by torch-bearers and the populace to the outskirts of the town, where they were left to trudge on alone. However, it was a sufficiently formidable army which advanced along the crisp white road. It appeared that a still larger army was already out, and having made a wide circuit, were now beating down a tortuous ravine which ran up to the heart of the dense forest. When every trace of dwellings had been left behind, the Louvetier led his party along a byway, very narrow, and skirting the precipitous sides of a valley. They had not advanced far when they came up with a small knot of men, the Mayor and a few local Nimrods from a village close at hand. A halt was made, the Louvetier and his servants disposing of the hunters in a wide semicircle. He and his chief *piqueur* keeping to the pathway, the fat captain took another path, while Lovel, Stringer, Belgarde, and de Berg were allotted the bed and sides of the ravine as a reward for their eagerness. When all was ready, word was passed along, and the whole line advanced cautiously—no easy task, with the brushwood covered with snow, the stream fringed with rushes and ferns encased in long icicles. But presently all were on the alert, fatigue forgotten: faintly in the distance shouts and clapping could be heard, floating down on the cutting breeze. The beaters were at work and at any moment the 'unexpected' might happen. Groping their way as well as they could, our friends were startled by a loud peculiar blare from a horn to their right, quickly followed by the yelping of dogs and the report of a rifle. Then came an echoing horn-blast from the left, followed by a whole volley. Belgarde and de Berg called out, for the signals told them that they would

have hot work in their direction. There was the swish of parting shrubs, the snap of twigs, and then a huge shaggy brute with glaring eyes, pointed ears, and red jaws appeared to Lovel, hesitated a moment, and with one leap cleared the noisy brook, and sped away, but not before a bullet had grazed his flank. Belgarde and de Berg, hallooing like mad, dashed after him, an example quickly followed by Lovel and Stringer, who were joined by a *piqueur* and a couple of hounds. No doubt frightened by the beaters behind and the noise on all sides, the wounded brute crouched behind a rock, and suddenly leaped upon Stringer, upsetting him with the impact of his hairy body. In an instant the two hounds attacked the wolf, and then commenced a fierce battle, the four men unable to fire lest they shot the dogs. Belgarde and the *piqueur* had drawn their hunting-knives, and hovered round the three furious beasts. One of the noble hounds rolled over in its last agony, and the wolf flew at his throat, endeavouring to shake off his second enemy. Belgarde seized the opportunity, and, darting in, boldly inflicted a deadly gash just behind the shoulder. The huntsman finished the work, and turned to look after the dogs. Meanwhile a prodigious din of battle was going on all about them. Lovel and de Berg clambered up to the path, just in time to see a huge black body dashing across the pathway.

'Don't fire, don't fire! my pig, my poor pig!' The Mayor, his hat at the back of his head, his tricoloured sash floating in the wind, his gun clubbed, held up his arms in an agony of entreaty.

Yes, this was no wolf, but a fat domestic porker which came rushing down, charging his master and upsetting the good man, whose gun went off with some danger to M. Arebours. The grunter disappeared squealing viciously, leaving the Mayor floundering in the pathway.

'Sapristi! le cochon du Maire!' cried the *piqueur*, beating off the dogs.

'Sacrebleu! ce cochon de Maire!' said the Secretary-General, looking ruefully at his hat, singed by the unlucky pig-owner's involuntary shot.

'Smelt powder at last, M. Arebours?' sneered the dapper lieutenant.

'I have done so before—at twelve paces, sir, and am prepared to do so again.'

'My dear Secretary-General,' M. Truc put up his hands

deprecatingly, looking nervously round, 'don't let us quarrel. We can easily get rid of pigs. The Mayor can resign.'

'Gentlemen, gentlemen, to your posts! We have come out to kill wolves, not pigs or ——,' de Beaujarret seized the Sous-Prefect by the arm and added, 'Jackasses!' with a significant glance at the bellicose champions of the military and civil administrations.

True enough, the hubbub had not ceased, though the horn-blasts and yelping had swept on ahead. Rushing over the snow, greatly impeded by the brushwood, the party hurried on, leaving the bewildered Mayor to follow his farmyard pet. The work was getting difficult, for the two remaining wolves were doubling backwards and forwards, between beaters and hunters, though keeping clear of the hounds. There was not much chance of a shot, and the brutes had to be brought to bay by the dogs, and killed by the hunters with their knives. Flushed with victory, M. Garance de Beaujarret leant on his rifle, marshalling his huntsmen about him, and then giving the word of command, a prolonged musical blast on the horns made the woods reverberate. It was a joyous sound, and no doubt as it was borne away on the breeze caused many a happy sigh to escape from the peasants in their fields and cottages. M. de Beaujarret was proud of his morning's work—five great wolves done to death—and received the congratulations of the rival Secretary-General and Sous-Prefect with a good deal of condescension. It was all too quickly over to please Lovel and Stringer, but the retreat was being sounded.

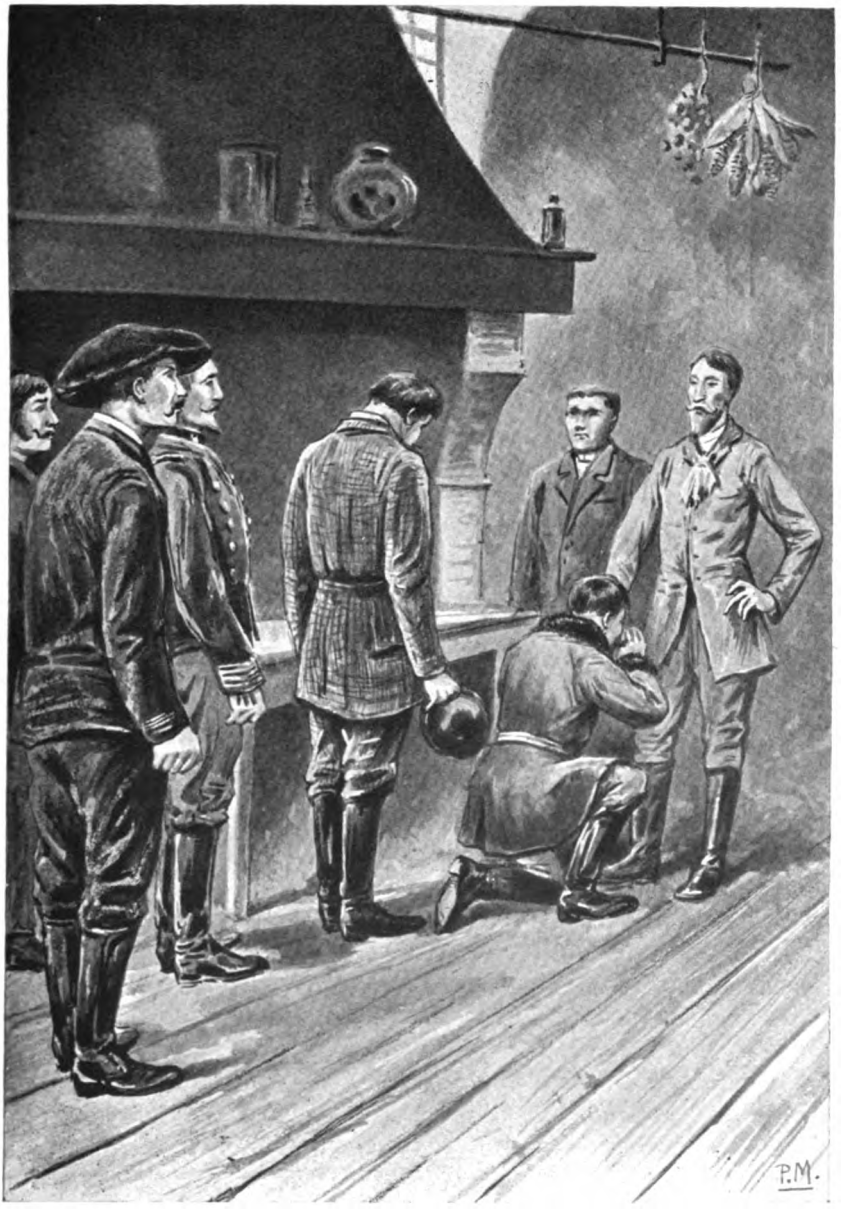
'Gentlemen, we will make our way through the forests over yonder hills to a cosy *cabaret* we know of; you will refresh yourselves at my expense.'

'No, M. le Louvetier,' cried M. Malfois Arebours, stepping hurriedly in front of the Sous-Prefect, who was just about to speak. 'I must be host, for it is the Department that bears the expense.' He looked triumphantly at M. Truc.

Belgarde laughed; de Berg twisted his moustache.

'There they go, these civilian officials, always squabbling. Truc thinks he's top-sawyer, Arebours represents his master and think he's got a future before him.'

As every one was famished, they took little heed of the squabble. The essential was that good wine and food awaited them and would be paid for by the Government; the question as to which office would disburse was of little consequence to hungry and thirsty men. The procession was much longer



'STANDING SOMEWHAT IN THE BACKGROUND WERE TWO MEN'

now and far more noisy. Horns were sounded, shots fired in the air, and men shouted. Under such circumstances the ground was quickly covered. Once more the high-road was reached, and a large inn, with smoking chimneys, gladdened all hearts.

Several women and a boy or two came out on the roadside as the party approached, crying out in alarm when they saw the carcases of the great wolves. M. de Beaujarret, with the Secretary-General on his left and M. Truc on his right, stepped into the great kitchen-parlour, closely followed by de Belgarde, the two officers, and the others. It was a huge room, low-ceiled, with rough walls once whitewashed, now black with the smoke of many winters. The windows were small and encrusted with dirt, but the loud crackling wood and leaping flames in the open fireplace, before which a sheep and a pig were twirling and sending forth appetising aromas, lit up the room fiercely. Standing somewhat in the background, partly in the shade, were two men. One was tall with a pointed head, wore a light-coloured beard, and had somewhat the appearance of a youthful, well-bred Don Quixote. His companion was short, wiry; his beard and hair, closely cropped, were iron-grey; and small beady eyes glowed under heavy brows.

M. de Beaujarret bowed politely. Arebours and Truc glanced at each other, stepped back, and cast a frightened look upon the two officers, who had just entered talking carelessly together. As de Belgarde came in he started violently, then stepping forward, bent his knee before the bearded stranger and kissed the extended hand.

A thrill of astonishment—of dread—passed through the assembly at this unexpected performance. Quickly the tall man advanced into the full glare of the leaping flames.

'Gentlemen, you are welcome! It is a happy augury to be met on the threshold of my State by my Louvetier, bringing with him so goodly a body of valiant companions.' He held out his hand to M. Beaujarret, and bowed with winning smile to the officers. Then he frowned as he turned to his little grey companion. 'M. Buffetier?'

But that gentleman had sidled up to the Secretary-General and was buttonholing him.

'This, Monseigneur,' de Belgarde came forward, 'is M. Garance de Beaujarret, the Louvetier.'

'Ah! an ancient house. *La robe.*'

'This is M. Truc, Sous-Prefect; Captain Trichet of the

Ligne ; Lieutenant Le Roy de Berg, of the Chasseurs Alpins ; and M. Malfois Arebours, Secretary-General of the Department.'

As they were presented, each man bowed low. M. Truc, however, looked anxiously at the Secretary-General, who merely made a stiff inclination of the head.

'This is indeed lucky, to find you all out here doing such noble work, protecting the poor people from hungry wolves. I, too, am here to do my duty, to hunt other kind of wolves. But to table, gentlemen : let us do justice to the fare provided for us, and afterwards we can consult. Colonel, Major, come and sit on my left. M. le Louvetier and you, dear Prefect, on my right.'

M. Arebours glowered when he heard M. Truc called 'Prefect,' but he took his seat by M. Buffetier and observed everything, listening and saying little. Though the feast was plentiful, it was a dull affair, everybody was anxious and curious. Garance de Beaujarret, in all the bravery of his bright blue and scarlet and gold, was ill at ease, trying to thrust forward M. Truc, who hesitated, and rushed from the extremes of brutal speech to the Louvetier to the most obsequious acknowledgments of Monseigneur's remarks, which chiefly related to feeding and drinking. Captain Trichet was stolid, the Lieutenant was flushed, drank heavily, twirled his moustache, and seemed rather inclined to quarrel with de Belgarde, who, cool and collected, was walking from one group to another, reporting now and then to the weazened little M. Buffetier. Lovel and Stringer looked on amused, doing, however, hearty justice to the meal, in this following the example of Monseigneur. When the dishes were cleared away, and great platters of nuts, red-cheeked apples, and dried figs appeared, de Belgarde standing behind Monseigneur proposed a toast. Lovel and Stringer rose to their feet, their glasses, brimming over, held on high. With a defiant glare de Berg got up. The Captain rose slowly, Truc bobbed up and down, and the Louvetier, roughly assisted by the toastmaster, got on his legs. It was a half-hearted affair. With a quick nod to his henchman Monseigneur arose, and in mellifluous tones thanked all present for the spontaneous welcome accorded him. With many words and involved phrases he went on to tell the company some secrets of great events brewing. He relied upon the political sagacity of M. de Beaujarret, whose ancestors had served his own so well in the Courts ; he looked for the able assistance of two such administrators as the Prefects

present; and he knew he could count on the devotion of the gallant Colonel and Major, who were ready with their swords in a good cause. Monseigneur was convinced that he was surrounded by men not only of stout hearts, but men who were geniuses as well. Everybody was to have his superlative abilities recognised, and consequently step up many grades at a bound. It was not quite clear what was to be done, but whatever it was it would be sublime and—above all—successful.

'Better see the bally thing through, I suppose!' Lovel bent over and whispered.

'Guess we'll go along and watch how the cat jumps, anyway.'

'They are all doing that. Look at those fellows Trichet, Truc and Arebours.'

'And the wolf-eater, too. He's as slippery as any.'

Monseigneur was nearing his peroration, and had made a polite reference to the presence of an Englishman (whose country he knew so well), and an American (whose history and domestic affairs had so greatly interested his father), when he accidentally struck his head against a lamp which hung from a beam over the table.

'*Gare à la poire!*' The shrill voice of a small boy rang out clear. There was many a guffaw, but M. Buffetier and de Belgarde seized hold of the culprit, and in spite of kicks pitched him head first into the snow.

Monseigneur looked dignified, trying to appear not to notice the snigger of Captain Trichet and the black glances of the Lieutenant. He perorated, but stopped short when his small antagonist, his shock-head powdered with snow, opened a window and yelled:

'*Vive Bonaparte!*'

A dash was made for the impudent rascal, and Monseigneur, appropriating de Belgarde's warm cloak, gave orders that horses should be saddled for himself and M. Buffetier. When these were brought round Monseigneur mounted and led the way townwards. De Belgarde had got the hunt servants together, forming them into a bodyguard round the two cavaliers. De Berg stuck close to Monseigneur, and the Captain followed in the footsteps of the Lieutenant. The procession swelled as it advanced, new-comers running up to hear the news and remaining curiously to see the upshot. Monseigneur, warm and dry-shod, was extremely jovial, and readily gave his consent to the *piqueurs* playing on their horns, though his military advisers looked disturbed at the idea.

All was going gaily. Plans were being gravely discussed, for grand times were ahead, to commence with a Gargantuan dinner at the Prefecture and a fine ball at the Opera House.

Suddenly some small boys who were leading the van, vociferating patriotic songs of mixed shades, brandishing great branches of fir-trees, stopped, lowered their banners, and retreated on the main body. Once more an uncomfortable thrill went through the crowd, which was intensified when a small band of Chasseurs Alpins came in view, swinging round a bend of the road, a bugler at their head, in charge of a sergeant. There was more than a moment's hesitation, and part of the crowd began to melt away mysteriously. M. Arebours, his eyes dancing, approached Monseigneur. Then de Berg stepped forward, gave a word of command and brought his men to a halt. He spoke to the sergeant, and Monseigneur harangued the men. Obedient to the word of command, they wheeled round, reinforced the huntsmen-guards, and once more the procession grew big and moved forward. M. Arebours, intimidated by the armed force and a fierce glare from de Belgarde, drew off and placed himself close to M. Truc.

Yes, Monseigneur was in a radiant humour. All was going well. But what was that?

'*Halte!*'

Three gendarmes came trotting round another corner. The *brigadier* obeyed the sharp order of de Berg, but looking puzzled at the singular group, espied the infantry officer.

His hand was up to his cocked hat.

'Mon Capitaine!' he called, 'I have despatches.'

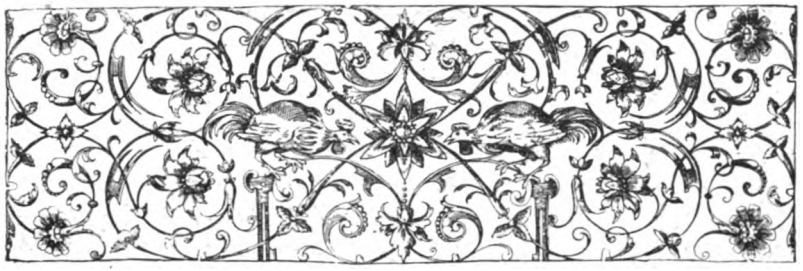
Captain Trichet stood irresolute, glancing from Monseigneur to the Lieutenant. The soldiers, quite passive, awaited their own officer's orders; while the gendarmes, their carbines in their hands, watched the crowd hungrily. Captain Trichet made up his mind, he approached Monseigneur; but it was too late. The gendarmes showed no signs of wavering, and Arebours had also settled on a line of conduct.

'I can depend upon them,' muttered de Berg. But, apparently bewildered, he gave no orders as the gendarmes trotted up; made no stir as Monseigneur and his henchman backed their horses and, gaining a pathway, galloped away.

'*Main forte*, I arrest this man.' The Secretary-General had the Sous-Prefect by the throat.

'*Gredins!*' shouted de Belgarde, turning furiously on the officers, and then doing his best to impede the mounted police.

He was successful, for the confusion was fearful. Nobody seemed to know what was happening. And nobody ever did. It was said that two distinguished strangers had joined the wolf hunt, and some declared that they were wolves in sheep's clothing. Nothing was known. But Arebours ran Truc through the heart the next morning, and at the same hour de Berg shot Captain Trichet through the head, and half an hour later killed de Belgarde. Merely *affaires d'honneur*. Captain Trichet and the Comte Aimé de Belgarde are under the turf; Monseigneur is away enjoying himself; de Berg is on the General Staff; and M. Arebours has been promoted to a Prefecture. The wolves, meanwhile, are waiting for another hard winter.



A PRIZE COMPETITION

THE Proprietors of the BADMINTON MAGAZINE propose to offer a prize of Ten Guineas each month for the best original photograph sent in representing any sporting subject. Ten other prizes will also be given away each month, each of them consisting of an original drawing by one or other of the artists who illustrate the Magazine. Good clear pictures are of course necessary, and when possible the negative should be sent as well as the print. Every sportsman or sportswoman, and indeed, every boy or girl, who possesses a camera has a chance of gaining a prize. Competitors may also send any photographs they have by them on two conditions: that they have been taken by the sender, and that they have never been previously published. A few lines explaining when and where the photographs were taken should accompany each negative, and if the account of the scene extends to any length and can be utilised it will be paid for at the usual rate per page. Residents in the country who have access to shooting parties, or who chance to be in the neighbourhood when hounds are running, will doubtless find interesting subjects, and these will also be provided at football or cricket matches, wherever golf, cycling, fishing, skating, polo, athletics are practised. Racing and steeple-chasing, including Hunt Meetings and Point-to-point contests, should also supply excellent material. All matters of public school interest will be welcome.

We shall be unable to return any rejected matter except under special circumstances, and we reserve the right of using anything of interest that may be sent in, even if it should not receive a prize.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Some [illegible] long continued [illegible] against the [illegible] in the operation [illegible] the selection was a [illegible] of course, quite [illegible] I did think that Manifesto would win last year, but I must confess that I did not fancy Drogheda the year before, the Soarer in 1896, or Wild Man from Borneo in 1895; so that the fifteen may not include the winner. Here, however, they are: Manifesto, Gentle Ida, Hidden Mystery, Ambush II., Fairland, Ford of Fyne, Lambay, Cathal, Dead Level, Drogheda, Easter Ogue, Breemont's Pride, Romanoff, Elliman and Shaker.

Assuming that Manifesto is not asked to carry more than [illegible] I shall expect to see him win, for though the

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

THE weights for the Grand National are not, of course, published at the time of writing. There are always some horses in the race, however, that can have no possible chance—or so at any rate it appears, though what I have said of Pan and Magpie in my article elsewhere in the Magazine bears out the idea that it is never wise to say what may or may not happen. Glancing through the entry, one always recognises a number of horses that seem possible or probable winners, that is to say, it is known that, with fair luck, they will jump and 'get' the course. Some friends of mine, who ought to be good judges if long continued study of the sport can make them so, picked fifteen against the field when the entries came out, and as I helped in the operation of selecting them I naturally conclude that the selection was a reasonable one; though how that may appear about four o'clock on the afternoon of the 30th of next month is, of course, quite another matter. I did think that Manifesto would win last year, but I must confess that I did not fancy Drogheda the year before, the Soarer in 1896, or Wild Man from Borneo in 1895; so that the fifteen may not include the winner. Here, however, they are:—Manifesto, Gentle Ida, Hidden Mystery, Ambush II., Fairland, Ford of Fyne, Lambay, Cathal, Dead Level, Drogheda, Easter Ogue, Breemont's Pride, Romanoff, Elliman and Shaker.

Assuming that Manifesto is not asked to carry more than 12 st. 10 lb., I shall expect to see him win, for though the

others all seem possible, there appears to be an 'if' about each of them. Hidden Mystery, having won the Sefton Steeplechase, is certain to be weighted up to his best form; but he is an Ascetic, and it is wonderful how consistently well the sons and daughters of this Hermit horse perform. Fairland is also an Ascetic, whom I made an attempt to buy last November for a friend, and it will be in a way exasperating therefore if she wins for somebody else, as I just missed her by the narrowest shave; though whether she stays and is good enough I have a very small idea. Ambush II. performed moderately last year, when, however, my impression is that he was rather overdone. Ford of Fyne and Cathal have both been unsound, but Mr. Arthur Yates tells me that the latter is in good work again, and they have both been so near the mark on several occasions that they cannot be left out in choosing a lot against the field. Lambay will not strike many people as a National horse, still she is an honest mare who jumps and stays; she is a daughter of Royal Meath, another very successful sire of steeplechase horses, and I rate her among the 'just possibles.' Dead Level comes into much about the same category; some of those who should know most about him doubt his getting the course, but he was fourth, if a long way off, last March.

Gentle Ida is far more likely to fall than to win, but she was so much fancied last year that she cannot be ignored. I do not believe that Drogheda is a good horse, and, as a previous winner, he is certain not to be let off by the handicapper; still, horses that have won have so often been there or thereabouts on subsequent occasions that it would not be safe to leave him out. Of Easter Ogue I know nothing except that he—another Ascetic—is the only representative of Escott's stable. Breemont's Pride, with a tube in her throat, starts—supposing that she does start—under manifestly severe disadvantages. What would happen if, in the course of the race, a splodge of mud were kicked up into the mouth of the tube I am not quite aware: it seems to me that she would very probably die. Romanoff gallops, jumps, and for all that any one knows, may be a genuine stayer. Elliman has been dreadfully unsound on various occasions, but is, I hear, patched up, may stand a preparation, and having finished third last year, is another 'possible'; and Shaker, having won over the Liverpool course—the Grand Sefton Steeplechase in 1898—may do so next month.

The Sapper is an animal I should have chosen in preference to several of the above but that I am afraid he will never be got to the post. Lotus Lily is another that has been talked about in previous years, but the best judges will not have her. Boreen would, I greatly fear, fail to stay; he is such a desperately hard puller that his getting the four miles and a half at Aintree seems doubtful. He will not run. Yorkmint is a useful young horse—young, that is to say, as steeplechase horses go—but the same doubt about staying attaches to him. Parma Violet, good little mare as she was, has been absent from courses so long that I fear she must have gone wrong. I am assured that Model will run better than most people suppose if he starts, but I cannot regard him as anything like a National horse. Levanter is another that, according to rumour, will some day surprise people, though I do not expect it will be at Liverpool next month. Tipperary Boy, another Royal Meath, ran notably well in, and was thought likely to win, the Conyngham Cup at Punchestown last April, when he fell. That is a four mile race, so that no doubt is entertained about his staying by those who should have known most about him. I left him out because I know him to be unsound. Horses that are so do sometimes stand preparations and win good races, but to my certain knowledge he has twice failed to pass the veterinary surgeon. Covert Hack won this Conyngham Cup last year in the hands of my friend Major Hughes Onslow—now hard at it with his regiment in South Africa—but though a possible, I cannot regard him as a very probable, winner. Some one suggested Barsac as one of the fifteen, the decision, however, being against him. Of course some of those I have named may not accept, and some of the hurdle-race horses may possess a capacity for jumping a country and astonish us by winning. I shall have more to say about the race next month.

I have written a note on this subject before, but return to it because the occasion still continues. *Is* it not odd that a not inconsiderable portion of correspondents and contributors will persist in calling this magazine the 'Badmington'? This is the fifty-fifth number; the magazine circulates extensively, is continually advertised, criticised, and quoted. It is an offshoot of the 'Badminton Library'; nine and twenty volumes of this work were originally published, of most of them several new editions have appeared, and they, too, are constantly referred to

in all sorts of papers, magazines, books, &c., all over the world. The series was named after *Badminton*, one of the great historical houses of England; there is a pack of hounds, the *Badminton*, whose fame for generations past has extended far and wide. A popular game is named *Badminton*, after the house, a favourite light drink is called *Badminton*, there is a well known *Badminton* Club. One would have thought, indeed, that *Badminton* was one of the best known names in the language, but yet letters continually reach me including the superfluous '*g*.' It is rather a remarkable thing that nearly all the articles sent by contributors who will persist in writing 'Badmin*g*ton,' are feeble in character: though possibly I regard them with a little adverse prejudice, I endeavour not to let it sway me. Having asked the question, whether it is not odd that so many people will inflexibly cling to the 'Badmin*g*ton,' I can only reply that it seems to me not only odd, but marvellous.

An exciting anecdote of the war was told the other day by an officer who got out of a tight place because his orderly, an ex-steeplechase rider, gave him a lead over a wire fence, and barbed wire at that. It is wonderful what horses will jump. In the colonies wire abounds, and men in the hunting field simply take it as it comes. Some years ago when Lord Onslow was Governor of New Zealand he kindly sent me some photographs of sportsmen, and indeed of sportswomen, going gaily at such extremely ugly obstacles. One of these photographs I lately came across, and here it is. It has been knocking about in a drawer for a long time and is so faded that the reproduction is necessarily feeble, but I give it instead of having it re-drawn as it is a veritable picture of what happens, and indeed of what happens constantly. Of course if any one does get a fall over such a fence it is an exceedingly awkward one, but Colonial sportsmen regard it as all in the day's work and go at it with no more hesitation than a hunting man in England shows when he has a 3 ft. hedge before him.

Several articles have been sent to me about American Jockeyship and I have selected the one which appears elsewhere, though I do not entirely agree with all the writer's conclusions. I think, for instance, that English jockeys have always tried to acquire a knowledge of pace, and that trainers always strive to instil it into their boys. Many jockeys, however, have tried in vain, and it is by no means every trainer who knows enough to teach, or has the knack of teaching, even if boys were more receptive than they are. So much has been talked and written about 'getting off' and 'making the best of the way home' that I expect next year we shall see some of the few jockeys who, like Mornington Cannon, really are judges of pace, waiting watchfully and easily passing a lot of badly beaten horses at the finish—as indeed we have seen during the year that has passed. The author, asking why an English jockey was shut in, inquires why we so seldom hear that excuse given by the Americans? It is well he did not say 'never' instead of 'so seldom,' for Lester Reiff, whom I take to be the best of the American jockeys, lost the Old Cambridgeshire on Airs and Graces for this very reason. The Americans are certainly to be credited for one of the virtues claimed for them in the article: they never attempt to 'draw it fine.' Fred Archer used to be painfully fond of this trick, so indeed have been some other otherwise admirable horsemen, and many races have been lost in consequence.

I well remember Webb, when about to get up on a good horse in which I was interested, saying to me 'I shall only win a head.' I begged him to make it a neck, as those short heads were far too exciting. He acquiesced with a grin and measured the neck to an inch. But one reason why this must be regarded as a grave mistake is that horses hate being called upon to make a sudden effort, and after it has been demanded of them several times are very apt to refuse it. With reference to the run off of the dead heat between Blend and Poulton, ridden by Bradford and J. Reiff, it must be remarked that Bradford is not by any manner of means the model finisher one would name as an exemplar of English jockeyship. I chanced to be on my way abroad in May when I noticed that a match had been arranged between Rowanberry, ridden by S. Loates, and Shepperton, ridden by Sloan; at the weights these were absolutely the same animal, and I wired up to back Rowanberry, convinced that if it came to a finish, as it seemed certain to do,

S. Loates would have the best of it—as the event proved. As to waiting or making a pace, a great many people who discuss the matter fail entirely to consider that this depends almost entirely upon the capacity of the horse. Mornington Cannon, for instance, knew that Flying Fox stayed, and he was a long way in front of Sloan on Caiman for a mile and a half in the Leger. There seems reason in the idea of bringing the weight on the horse more forward, 'thereby putting it chiefly on the part best constructed for carrying it'; and yet we all remember how Fred Archer used to sit back and drive his horse home, and we all know what his average of wins was. Fordham, on the other hand—and it seems generally agreed by the best judges that no better jockey ever lived—sat far forward, much in the American style. The subject is an exceedingly intricate one.

Among the two-year-olds of the present year I do not find quite the average number of happy names. Often, of course, a name is so obvious when syllables from sire and dam make a suitable word, that the owner looks no further. 'Ample,' for instance, is at once suggestive by Amphion and Miss Little. 'Belle of the Green' makes itself out of Blue Green and Rustic Belle, 'Breadmart' out of Martagan and Bread Maid, and I suppose 'Butter Mart' out of Martagan and Butterine, though so far as I am aware Butterine is a horrible combination which has nothing to do with butter. 'Antonelli' comes under the head of good for a son of Father Confessor and Antonia, and 'Bashi Bazook' does well for the Forager—Free and Easy colt. 'Baedeker' is appropriate for the son of Quæsitum and Cologne. 'Be Sure' is a tolerably neat sort of pun for the Sure Foot—Queen Bee filly; but I do not expect Indian officers and officials will at all agree with Mr. Ryan's name for his Right Away—Rupee colt. He calls it 'Depreciation'; the 'right way' for the 'rupee' to go would surely be 'Appreciation'? The colt by Gold—Recollection has not got a name. It strikes me that 'Change' would do for it—the silver that remains as a 'recollection' of the last gold piece when it is changed? 'High Feather' is not at all bad for the Henry of Navarre—High Tea filly—'Press where ye see my snow white plume above the ranks of war,' is of course the idea. The Marvel—Crest filly is so well named 'Hoopoo' that it is a pity to find her so little engaged.

It is a pity also, I think, if Sir Frederick Johnstone will not mind the remark, to find the self-advertising mischief-maker 'Kensit' as the name of a well bred, and, it is to be hoped, decently behaved colt, a son of St. Simon and Shrew. 'Queen's Prize' sufficiently describes the son of Mousquetaire and Queen Mary, and 'Goosey Gander' is found to have some appropriateness for the daughter of Perigord and Michaelmas Daisy when one remembers that geese are Michaelmas birds and are also associated with the famous *pâté* of Perigord. 'Psalm' is not particularly successful for the St. Simon—Poem filly, because, as readers are doubtless aware, the St. Simon was not a saint of the Church, but a writer of Memoirs. 'Surf Scoter' is perhaps a permissible pun for the son of St. Serf and Bird of Passage. 'Turtle Dove' does well enough for the Matchmaker —Holy Bird filly, though one would like to see all reference to the Scriptures omitted from the list of horses' names, and 'Wind Bag,' also in the nature of a pun, hits off the Ayrshire—Eloquence colt.

As usual at this time of year, letters reach me asking questions with regard to the eternal subject of systems at Monte Carlo. 'I know that none is anything like a certainty,' one correspondent writes, 'but which do you think is the best?' I not only think, but I am quite sure, there is no 'best.' Any one of a score of systems may come off for a time—or may not—but the more one studies the question, not at home with a pencil and a sheet of paper, but sitting at a roulette table at Monte Carlo, the more hopeless appears the idea of consistent success by any system. I know several people who tell me they always win, but, though they may not expect it, the time will in all probability come when their confidence will have a rude awakening. I should be delighted to answer my correspondents if I had any hope of giving useful advice, but personally I have long since abandoned the attempt to find a system. Chance and luck govern the whole business. If you are lucky you will win, and you are just as likely to do so in one way as another.

The Badminton Magazine

THE MASTER'S VICTORY

BY T. F. DALE

'GOOD morning, Miss Clive. Are you still as eager as ever to hunt a pack of hounds?'

'Yes, indeed, if you are not afraid of my jumping on them, or doing anything else dreadful.'

But Jack Couplestone, the young Master of the Churnston Foxhounds, did not look as if he were afraid of anything that would secure him some hours of Mary Clive's company. To hunt his own hounds, and at the same time enjoy the society of the woman who had taken captive his affections, was an altogether enchanting prospect.

Mary Clive was a handsome, well-grown girl, whose frank enthusiasm for the joys of the hunting-field had first attracted the attention of the Master. She was young, she was keen, and it was her first season with hounds. Small wonder, then, that she looked up to the Master with feelings little short of veneration.

It was only two years since Jack Couplestone had been chosen Master by the Churnston Hunt Committee, with the understanding that he should be allowed to hunt the hounds himself. Since then his reputation had been steadily rising,

for never had such sport been shown in the Churnston country. During two seasons of almost unbroken good scent, long and brilliant runs had been the rule rather than the exception, and the way in which the young Master stuck to the line of his hunted fox roused the admiration of the old farmers, who had many of them been filled with forebodings when matters were taken out of the hands of the huntsman who had grown grey in the service of the hunt.

The Churnston hounds were in the heyday of popularity, the fields were large and the subscriptions good, and Jack

Couplestone was reckoned one of the most rising masters of the day.

There was but one dissentient voice that made itself heard when the praises of the Master were sung. A sturdy farmer, who from boyhood to a green old age had followed hounds, and knew every inch and corner of the country, refused to believe in the skill that had been crowned by such glorious results.

'All very well to talk,' he was wont to affirm; 'just wait a bit. Yes, the Master he *do* show sport, but, there, so would any one when scent is just screaming. He may hit off the line, but it ain't because he knows the run of his foxes, for he ain't no idea of it by hisself. I've watched, and he don't cast not with no plan to speak of—just anyhow, all round the hat as the

saying is. Yes, *by hisself*, I say,' Tom Ferneley would repeat emphatically to any one who disagreed with him, and with a solemn shake of the head leave his words for the listener to unravel as he pleased.

'Where is Victory, Simpson?' asked the Master, after he had cast a keenly critical look at the hounds waiting on the green in front of the Three Pigeons. 'Did you not bring her out?'

'Yes, sir,' was the ready answer, as the kennel huntsman lowered a pewter tankard from his lips and tried to look as if he had not been enjoying the contents.

In vain Simpson's practised eye searched for the lemon pied head of the upstanding old hound which he knew had been there when he rode up to the Meet. Had he only known it, it was whilst a tall soldierly man had been talking to him, and while the honest face of Jim, the whipper-in, formed a red halo round the mug from which he was draining the last drop, that old Victory had wandered from the pack and trotted to investigate the possible attractions of the hedge on the far side of the road.

It was a saying in the kennel that 'there was nothing old Vict'ry didn't know,' and now she seemed aware that Jim's eye was off her and she was free to follow her own instincts.

She had not gone far before she struck on an altogether fascinating odour of high meat, and with head down she followed the scent along the hedge. There in a smeuse lay a lump of meat—butcher's meat—and with a cautious look round at the unresponsive Jim, the old hound made a dash at the dainty. She missed it, but as she drew back for a moment in astonishment, she saw it lying just the other side of the hedge. Darting through, she made another snatch at it. Still the elusive morsel slipped away; but Victory's blood was now up, and with no thought of anything else, she followed. Once, twice, again she almost but not quite secured the prize, and then, seeing it lying at the bottom of a deep ditch, she jumped down after it.

As she did so a strong hand grasped her by the neck, and in a second a strap was passed round her jaw and she was bundled into a sack. A smothered laugh rose from the owner of the brawny arms that had secured her as the mouth of the sack was tied, and Victory, the best hunting hound of the pack, lay useless for purposes of sport.

So Victory was not to be found.

Simpson called, and Jim and the second whipper-in in vain

searched the farm buildings at the back of the Three Pigeons. At last even the Master gave up hope, and jogged off to Branksby Gorse to begin the business of the day.

'I think it must be just the most delightful thing in the world to hunt hounds,' observed Mary Clive as she and the Master trotted side by side along the lane leading to the gorse, and as she spoke she turned a glance of frank admiration on the M.F.H.

It needed no subtle knowledge of human nature, however, to tell Jack Couplestone that the incense so freely offered at his shrine was at that moment given for his office and not for himself. The unwavering glance from the clear brown eyes that met his forbade him to think otherwise.

A shadow crossed his face as he answered :

'Yes, there is nothing like it when all goes well.'

His companion looked up quickly.

'And who has better cause to congratulate himself on things going well ?' she demanded archly.

'Yes,' he repeated, 'I have had wonderful luck.'

And Mary was still wondering what the implied doubt in his tone could mean when the covert was reached.

The Master's heart indeed was heavy within him. He had noted signs that gave him but little hope of a good scenting day. He had seen gossamer webs floating in the air as he jogged along the ten miles that lay between his home and the Three Pigeons, and while he had stood watching his men's efforts to find old Victory, two or three of the hounds had enjoyed a good roll on the grass. It was, he felt sure, one of those bright soft early winter days that are at once so delightful and so bad for scent.

Gloomily, even though he had Mary Clive beside him, he trotted off to draw the covert. He spoke to his hounds as he went along, and for the first time he realised how bad his hound language was. It struck him, too, that his voice in covert resembled that of the historic Punch and Judy showman. As he moved about, his face had the worried look that had attracted Mary's attention earlier, and she asked herself if it could be anxiety about his favourite hound that brought it there. If so, it showed how keen the Master was and how interested in all that concerned his hounds ; and Mary, still in the first glow of her hunting experiences, felt a thrill of sympathy stir her, that might have cheered the Master had he known of it.

At last the whimper of a few hounds changed into a chorus.

A STRONG HAND GRASPED HER BY THE NECK

of eager voices ; then, driving along by the spot where Mary and her good mare were waiting, hounds poured into the open, and the Master, by a brilliant jump over the double post and rails that divided the covert from the grass fields beyond, was with them in a trice.

'Go for the gate to the left,' he shouted to Mary as he put his horse at the fence and disappeared, and she was fain to follow the direction, as in cold blood the redoubtable Branksby timber was not to be lightly attempted.

The knowledge that at least his horsemanship was such as but few if any of his hard-riding fields could emulate, and that Mary Clive had been the spectator of an exploit that must put him in the front rank of horsemen, somewhat soothed the Master's feelings as he galloped after the vanishing pack.

But his satisfaction was short-lived. In the third field the chorus ceased, as hounds wavered and came to a standstill, and then cast themselves eagerly along the hedge. It was no good, and they soon stopped and looked at the Master as much as to say, 'Now we have done all we can, suppose you try!' So he cast in various directions, till at last he crossed the heel line, and hounds straightway ran it back into covert.

''Ware heel, sir,' said the whipper-in, while old Tom Ferneley muttered to his neighbour, 'Look at that now. What did I tell you?'

But it was not till hounds were in covert and blank silence reigned that the Master recognised his mistake. Mary had overheard old Ferneley's remark, and she watched the Master keenly from the point of vantage near him to which she was entitled by his permission. Presently hounds were blown out of covert and the Master went off to try for another fox. This was soon found and as soon lost, and as another of old Ferneley's criticisms fell on Mary's ear she suddenly caught hold of her mare sharply by the head and set off in the direction of the Three Pigeons.

The flush on her face as she drew up at the door and called for the ostler was not entirely due to the rapid pace at which she had ridden, for an angry light flashed in her eyes, and there was a sharp ring in her voice as she demanded to see one of the men who had formerly been in her mother's service.

'Martin, where is old Victory?' she asked imperiously, and as the man gazed at her in speechless astonishment, she went on rapidly : 'You had better tell me, for I mean to have her.'

The man scratched his head and looked at her doubtfully.

'Well, Miss Mary,' he said at last slowly, 'you see, it's this way——'

But he was not allowed to proceed.

'Now, look here, Martin: if you don't want to get into trouble over this, you will let me have the hound without a moment's delay. Quick, now,' she said authoritatively, and raising her whip she pointed in the direction of the farm buildings.

Martin, seeing the look on her face, turned and hobbled off quickly towards a distant outhouse, from which, before many seconds had passed, an old lemon pied hound bounded out, and putting her nose to the ground was soon lost to sight down the lane along which hounds had passed that morning.

'All right, Martin. Now, don't say a word to any one till I see you again, and then perhaps you may not get what you deserve for this.' And Mary, too, disappeared in the wake of hound.

By the time she came up with the field, which was still stationed outside a covert in the immediate neighbourhood, the numbers had thinned considerably, but she was glad to see old Ferneley still in his place.

She went cautiously into the wood, and soon had the satisfaction of hearing the Master call out with a ring of triumph in his voice, as a shrill sharp note rose from the covert, 'Hark to Victory! Huic, huic, huic!'

In another moment the pack came clustering out, led by the old lemon pied, who was throwing her tongue eagerly. Hounds wavered again in the second field, for the fox, which had lain down in a dry ditch, had then scuttled along the fence. This was, however, too old a trick for Victory. She had missed the line, so stopping short she cast herself back to the fence and feathered up it, waving her stern the while. The Master's eye was on her. Two notes on his horn brought the scattered pack together, and just as old Victory topped the stile and threw her tongue in the next field, the hounds streamed onwards in a body. Twice again did the old hound put them right, and each time the Master had them going again without delay. Each time, too, they were nearer to their fox, and at last, as scent improved in the cooler air, they fairly raced after him. Twenty minutes at best pace, with the now silent hounds flitting in front, then the dreaded Muston Brook and a steep hill to finish up with, choked off most of the field. Mary, the Master, and the second whipper-in were the only ones in at a kill in the open.

one of the first to come to grief, an accident for which her jockey was held to be in a great measure responsible. Roquefort also fell, as did seven others, and Old Joe finally won from Too Good, with an outsider called Magpie, who started at 200 to 1, third. After the race Old Joe was lamer than ever ; his leg swelled to an enormous size, and after some days a huge nail was extracted from it. He had won the race with some ounces of iron in his flesh close to his fetlock. The only suggestion as to how it came there was that in jumping a post and rail, in the course of his preparation, he must have hit it hard just at a place where it had been nailed up, and so carried away the nail in his leg. How it was that the mischief did not develop more rapidly, for it happened some days before he went lame, I have no idea ; but this story is related on the best authority, that of his owner.

Every year before the National the question used to be, and it may be said is still, what had been sent from Ireland? In 1887 Spahi, a horse with a deservedly good reputation, was the representative of the dangerous Curragh stable, with Mr. T. Beasley, one of the band of brothers who could hold their own with the very best, in the saddle ; but Spahi had nothing to do with the finish, nor had Too Good, another notable steeplechase horse, ridden by Mr. H. Beasley. Roquefort this year was burdened with 12 st. 8 lb., and until close upon the finish it looked as if he were going to destroy another of the cherished theories at the Grand National—that no horse could possibly win with more than 12 stone on his back. I was not at Liverpool that year, but am told that after jumping on to the racecourse Roquefort, in spite of his burden, looked all over a winner, till, for some unascertained reason, he swerved and fell over the rails. Frigate was once more among the starters, ridden this year by a soldier, Mr. F. E. Lawrence, but she did not distinguish herself, and the winner turned up in the 20 to 1 chance, Gamecock, a good horse that afterwards, towards the close of a singularly successful career, became quite a popular idol, whose victories used to be received with cheers.

The year 1888 always struck me as a particularly interesting one, perhaps because I had seen something of the winner's preparation. At this time Tom Cannon was training, and frequently winning with, a number of good steeplechase horses, two of whom, Mr. E. W. Baird's Playfair and Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's Aladdin, were being prepared at Danebury for the great race. No one connected with the stable, including Tom

Cannon himself, had any real knowledge which was the better of the two at the weights, though Mr. C. W. Waller, who had been asked to ride for Mr. Rothschild, adopted a very strong opinion. He was convinced that Aladdin must beat his stable companion, and having taken 1000 to 30 about his mount declined even to save his modest stake on the other. There was not much between them, either, in the 'market,' for Aladdin started at 33 to 1 and Playfair at 40. But they both stood up and Aladdin finished fifth, very many lengths behind Playfair, who, after hitting some of the first fences very hard and nearly losing his balance, won, ridden by the Danebury jockey, Mawson, by ten lengths from Frigate, second, it will be seen, for the third time! I suppose few people realise the keen disappointment of being again and again so near the object of their ambition, and just failing to achieve it. The favourite this year, it should be said, was a really good Irish horse named Usna, who started at 100 to 15 in spite of his 12 st. 7 lb., Mr. H. Beasley up. Every year one hears of horses that 'must have won' the National if they had stood up, and Usna was one of this numerous company, though there may have been more in the claim in his case than there is as a rule. Some sort of accident happened to him about a mile from home, when certainly he was going strong and well; but he broke down badly and was never seen on a racecourse again.

At last, in 1889, after so many disappointments, Frigate was to be successful. Roquefort, 12 st. 7 lb., was favourite at 6 to 1, which shows that the 'over 12 stone' idea was by no means universally adopted, but he came to grief, and the final fight was between the good mare and a good horse of Mr. C. J. Cunningham's, Why Not, whose name crops up very constantly in the annals of Liverpool. They both carried 11 st. 5 lb., and were both much fancied, Frigate starting at 8 to 1, Why Not at 100 to 9. It was only by a length that Frigate, in the hands of Mr. T. Beasley, made up for the series of disappointments which had attended her efforts here, and it is possible that she might have failed but for an accident—an accident to another horse. Savoyard, who had carried 12 st. 4 lb. the year before, ridden by that excellent amateur, Mr. George Lambton—the possessor of extraordinarily good 'hands,' for it was rarely indeed that a horse ever pulled with him—was in the race in Frigate's year with 7 lb. less, and those who had taken 20 to 1 about him were congratulating themselves that the money was in their pockets, as people sometimes do just a little prematurely, when

he came down desperately hard at the last hurdle, clearing the way for the daughter of Gunboat and Fair Maid of Kent.

In 1890 eleven fell in the field of sixteen, a proportion which shows the chances of accident over these big fences. Frigate, who made her last appearance at Liverpool, was one of the lot that came to grief, and Why Not was another, though Mr. Cunningham, in spite of the fact that his fall was a very heavy one—in fact he was almost 'knocked out'—remounted and finished fifth, in front of a moderate animal called Emperor that had not been down. Mr. Cunningham felt the effects of his fall for many months after, and that he should have got up again and completed the course shows what a really hard man a steeplechase rider must be. A wretchedly bad animal named Pan, who started at anything over a 100 to 1, was second. He was very slow and a very indifferent jumper, and it is curious to reflect that if anything untoward had happened to Ilex—the Epsom horse who won—this creature, who had been bought out of a selling race a few weeks before for 120 guineas, and prior to the Grand National had run sixteen times that season in wretched little races and only twice been successful, each time from three opponents of the poorest class, would actually have won the Grand National!

There were one and twenty starters the next year, when the spoils fell to Ireland, the 4 to 1 favourite Come Away, ridden by Mr. H. Beasley, just getting home by half a length from Cloister, with my poor friend Captain 'Roddy' Owen up. Whether Come Away, good horse as he was, won on his merits, is a disputed point; the rider of Cloister always maintained that he would have beaten the Irish horse if Come Away's jockey had not deliberately interfered with him, and, indeed, nearly knocked him over at the last fence; and one may be certain that this was the deliberate opinion of a cool and experienced horseman. Come Away never ran again, but Captain Owen next year, oddly enough, was responsible for another second on Cloister's part, as he at length attained the summit of his ambition by winning the National, Father O'Flynn being the horse. This was never a really good animal, and he had a particularly wayward temper; with many riders he refused to do his best, and the ring seemed very glad to lay 20 to 1 against him in spite of his light weight—for he had only 10 st. 5 lb. to carry, and was receiving from Cloister 2 st. all but 2 lb. With 'Roddy,' however, he went well, and prior to the National the pair had twice passed the post together, though it should be

added that Mr. J. C. Dormer had also succeeded in getting a race out of him. These three previous successes had only mounted up to about £100 between them, and it seemed a long way from that sort of race to a National; poor 'Roddy,' however, who had been bent on winning the great race, and had declared that after doing so he would abandon steeplechase riding and devote himself to his profession, cantered home twenty lengths ahead of Cloister, and proved himself a man of his word, as is set forth at length in the interesting life of him called, 'Roddy Owen,' written by his sister Mrs. Mai Bovill and Mr. G. R. Askwith, a volume in the preface to which the authors are good enough to admit some obligation to me for help I was gladly able to give them in their task of compiling a memoir of my friend's Turf career. Ilex, who had been third the year before, was here third again.

Cloister in 1893 was to break all records, and finally dispose of the 'impossible to win with 12 stone' theory. He not only won with 12 st. 7 lb. on his back, but he cantered in after leading nearly all the way, forty lengths ahead of the second, and might in the most literal manner have won in a walk had his jockey, Dollery, chosen. He started favourite, though only by half a point from Why Not with Arthur Nightingall in the saddle, Why Not having 9 lb. the best of the weights. I chanced to be the guest at Liverpool that week of Mr. Charles Duff, the owner of Cloister, and know therefore that in winning, and in winning as he did, the horse merely accomplished what was most confidently expected of him; though he chanced more than one fence early in the race, and if he had not been as clever as a cat might easily have toppled over. Mr. Arthur Yates, who trained him, feared danger from only one quarter, and that was Cloister's stable companion The Midshipmite, of whom Mr. Yates continually entertained hopes with regard to the Grand National which were never justified—it rather vexed him, in fact it vexed him a good deal, when any one hinted doubts as to The Midshipmite's ability to get the National course, but nevertheless he consistently failed to do so, and the doubters, if my friend Mr. Yates will not mind my saying so, seemed to have some justification on their side. If the National had been three miles instead of four miles and a half, the results might in several cases have been very different, but the first essential to success is that the horse must be a most indubitable stayer. Cloister's win naturally gained him a great reputation, which he the better deserved because he was the

OVER THE WATER

most amiable of horses. After racing we went to see him in his box, and Mr. Duff leaned against his hocks, while explaining what a placid disposition his favourite possessed. Cloister, who was very busily engaged in munching his corn, merely turned round to see who was using him as a post. Æsop, second, in receipt of 2 st. 3 lb., had such credit as attached to being beaten by the length of a street ; Why Not was a very bad third, with The Midshipmite fifth.

A rather curious circumstance happened with regard to the Grand National of 1894. Cloister was a hot favourite, long before the race, at 5 to 1, and as I am occasionally foolish enough—I do not defend the practice—to back horses, I wrote to a very well-known bookmaker to invest on Cloister. He did not reply to my first, nor to a second, letter, and I was extremely angry at the discourtesy. Some months later I learnt the reason of his silence. Strong favourite as the horse was, and confidently hopeful as Mr. Duff and Mr. Arthur Yates were, my well-meaning bookmaker in some mysterious manner had absolutely—and quite correctly—convinced himself that the horse had no chance, and had refrained from answering my letter with the kindly desire to prevent me from throwing my money away. That is the incident, on which I make no further comment than that the National of 1894 was a very mysterious race. This was not all the mystery attached to it. As in the previous year, I was staying with Mr. Duff at Liverpool, and when I got down there was told that he had bought Ardcarn, that Mr. Bewicke, who was also staying with us, would ride—and no finer horseman, amateur or professional, has ridden over a country within my experience—and that owner and jockey were sanguine in the extreme that compensation would be made for the failure of Cloister, who had broken down. After dinner the night before the race the party of which I was one went out into the hall of the hotel, where a number of bookmakers had assembled, and Ardcarn was backed for a great deal of money. The outlay scarcely at all shortened his price. There seemed to be something wrong with him, though what it was neither owner nor rider had the remotest idea. I went with them next morning to see the horse in his box, but to all appearance he was as fit and well as an animal could be. The determined opposition to him was nevertheless persistent, and in the race, to the intense disgust of Mr. Bewicke—who, when he returned to our box, vowed he would never ride again—Ardcarn was beaten before

he had gone half a mile. It was said that he had split a pastern some time before, and that the opposition arose from the fact that those who knew most about him were convinced that he would feel the effects in the course of the struggle. How that may be I do not know, and as I am simply relating facts, avoiding speculations, I will say no more about the race than that Why Not carried 11 st. 13 lb. and, starting an equal favourite with a mare called Nelly Gray, won by a length and a half from an Irish mare, Lady Ellen II. Nelly Gray fell.

The clumsily named Wild Man from Borneo, who had run third to Why Not, won in the following year from what was probably a very bad field. Captain Michael Hughes' Æsop, who, as we have seen, was 2 st. 3 lb. and forty lengths behind Cloister, started favourite with 10 st. 8 lb. and Arthur Nightingall on his back. The second favourite was a Danebury trained horse named Horizon, about whose chances Tom Cannon was extremely hopeful, but he pecked and managed to get rid of his jockey, Mawson, good rider as he was, and danger from this quarter was thus disposed of. Why Not, who had been bought by Mr. Guy Fenwick with the laudable ambition of trying to win the National, made no show with 12 st., nor did Ardcarn with 10 st. 10 lb., starting this year at 50 to 1. The only animal that could make any sort of fight with the winner was Cathal, a six-year-old carrying 10 st. 9 lb., who was slightly fancied, although it was said he had not done nearly work enough. Manifesto, 11 st. 2 lb., was fourth, and though a useful horse at the time, cannot have been anything like the animal he subsequently became.

The next year, with 11 st. 4 lb. to carry, it is exceedingly probable that Manifesto would have won had he stood up, but there were twenty-eight starters and an unusual amount of grief, he being one of the large majority of the field who fell. Ardcarn, ridden by Williamson, was almost as good a favourite as the Epsom trained Rory O'More, and they were practically on the same line as the Irish Waterford. Why Not with 11 st. 5 lb. this year, Arthur Nightingall up, was also fancied. But the winner came from a very unexpected quarter, as, moreover, it may be added, did the second. Mr. D. G. M. Campbell, who had previously ridden The Soarer unsuccessfully in six races before Liverpool and successfully in one, landed a 40 to 1 chance, and the same odds were laid against Father O'Flynn, ridden by another energetic amateur, Mr. Cecil Grenfell. It was a gratifying circumstance, which I have mentioned else-

where but am tempted to repeat, that Mr. Campbell, with whom I was not then acquainted, very kindly wrote to me after the race to say that he attributed his success in no small measure to the advice on riding given in my book on Steeplechasing.

Cathal, who had been bought by Mr. Reginald Ward, a keen amateur bent above all else on winning the Liverpool, had been a good deal fancied in 1896, and next year was almost as strong a favourite as Manifesto, to whom Cathal was set to give seven pounds. It was not then generally recognised, however, what sort of a horse Manifesto was; he here gave a taste of his quality by winning in a canter by twenty lengths, the other favourites all being out of it, Mr. Charles Beatty getting second on Filbert (9 st. 7 lb.), 100 to 1 offered, who just had a head the best of Ford of Fyne (10 st. 7 lb.). This last started favourite next year, again ridden by Mr. Withington, as good a horseman as one could hope to have up on one's fancy; Cathal was second favourite at 7 to 1, for the whole complexion of the race had been altered by the breakdown of Manifesto, who, in spite of the weight the handicapper had given him, was greatly fancied. He had been bought for a large sum of money—4000 guineas it was said—by Mr. Bulteel, and was to have been ridden by Mr. Cecil Grenfell; but something went wrong with him, and he had to be stopped in his work.

Differences of opinion of the most pronounced character existed with regard to Drogheda, the winner this year. I happened to be staying in a house shortly before the race with two amateur horsemen, both of whom have distinguished themselves in Grand Nationals, and who might be supposed to know all about the competitors, as they were both hoping to ride in the race, in which, indeed, one of them finished well up; and their information was to the effect that Drogheda had no chance whatever. The result proved that they were wrong. The race was run in a snowstorm, which the Irish horse did not seem to mind, though Cathal disliked it very much, and Mr. Ward, who finished second, beaten three lengths, firmly believed that with better weather and a little luck he would have compassed his great ambition and won the Liverpool on his own horse.

Manifesto last year was happily himself again, and strongly fancied in spite of having to carry Cloister's weight, 12 st. 7 lb., in spite, also, of a story to the effect that his late stable companion, Gentle Ida, who was here in receipt of a stone from him, was, in fact, the better of the two at even weights. This

legend was reflected in the market, the mare started at 4 to 1, Manifesto at 5, a five-year-old belonging to the Prince of Wales, called Ambush II., being third favourite, slightly preferred to the Sapper, a 10 to 1 chance, the short price being doubtless, to some extent, due to the fact that he was ridden by that admirable horseman, Mr. Gwyn Saunders-Davies. Manifesto, however, had things all his own way. Williamson was content to win by five lengths, but might have multiplied the distance considerably had there been any object in doing so. Gentle Ida and Sapper both fell, as did several others, and, in fact, since then the mare has proved herself what is known as a very 'sketchy' jumper. Ford of Fyne, who has so often been close up, was second.

On the subject of the coming National I may have something to say in my Notes elsewhere in this number, as they will not go to press till a few days after this article is out of my hands.

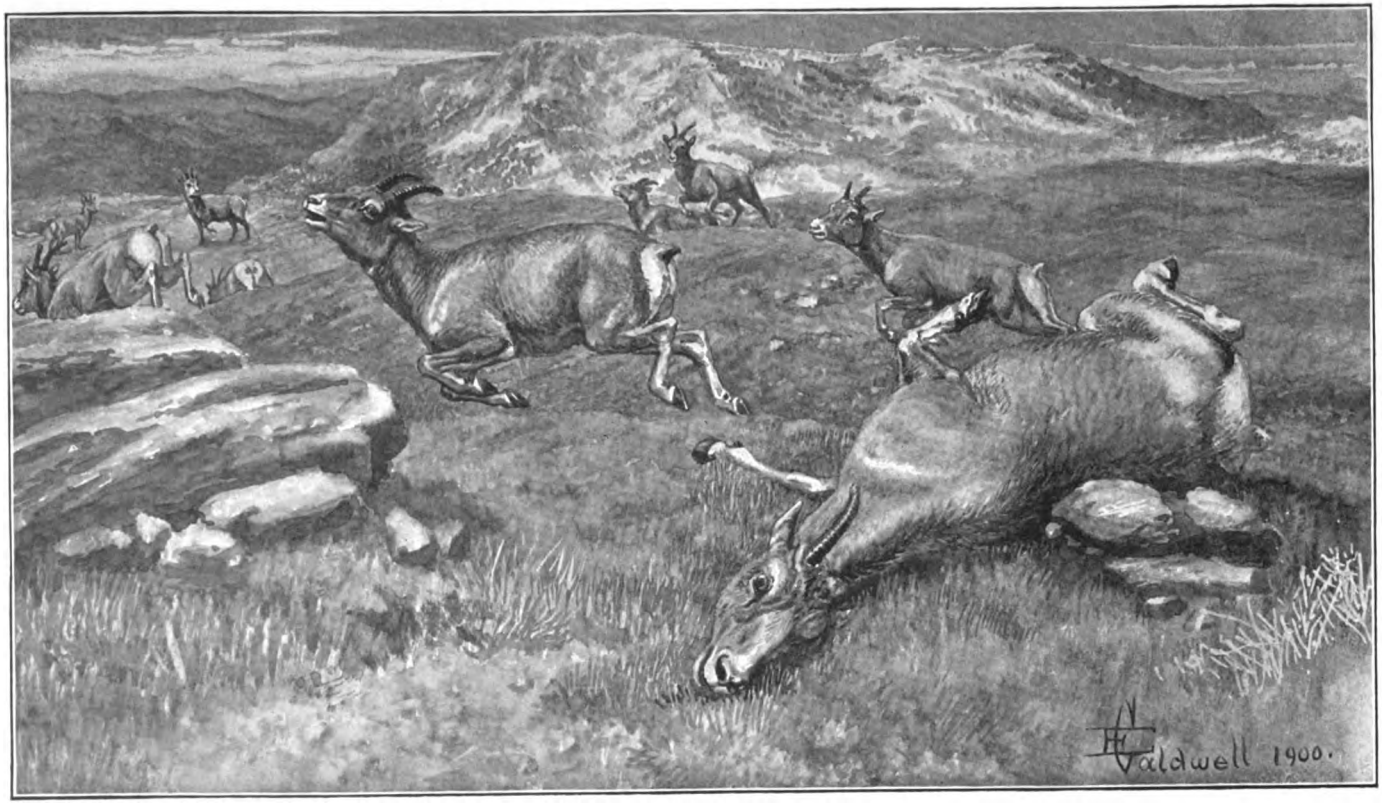
NOTES ON A LATTER-DAY HUNTING TRIP IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

BY F. C. SELOUS

It was not till September 29 that I saw a mule deer buck with a head worth keeping, though I had previously shot quite a young one for the sake of the meat. On the occasion in question I was walking along the side of a steep hill thickly covered with spruce and pine trees, when my eyes suddenly became aware of an animal just above me. Turning my head I saw a beautiful buck mule deer gazing fixedly down at me, from a distance of not more than forty yards. Its attitude betokened intense curiosity mingled with apprehension, and its large dark eyes seemed riveted upon me in a gaze expressive both of fear and hope—fear lest I should prove dangerous; hope that I might not. As I raised my rifle and looked at those appealing eyes, I was for an instant conscious of feelings altogether out of place in a hunter's breast. It seemed a shameful thing to take the life of this trustful brute, and I half wished that he would bound away and only give me a running shot. However, he never stirred till my bullet struck him full in the chest. Then he came rushing close past me down the hill, but did not roll over dead, though shot right through the heart, till he had run a distance of nearly a hundred yards! He was a beautiful creature, very thick-set and heavy looking, though symmetrically built. He had already donned his autumn coat of soft grey with a very conspicuous white rump. The upper half of the tail was white, and here the hair was short, but the lower part was deep black, ending in a small brush. In the black-tailed deer of British Columbia the whole tail is black. Otherwise this species seems to nearly resemble the mule deer, though its ears are smaller, I believe. In the

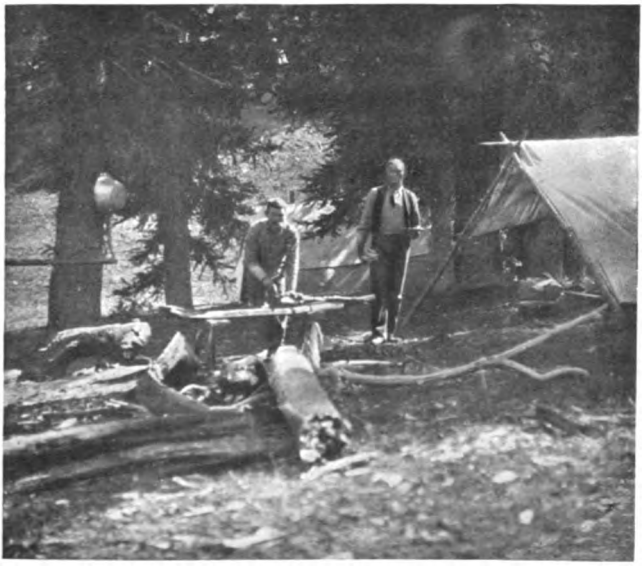
mule deer the ears are very large—actually larger than in its giant cousin the wapiti—and very hairy and fluffy inside. The white patch on the hind quarters, which extends to a little above the root of the tail in winter, is very conspicuous when a deer of this species is going straight away from one, but is scarcely noticeable in a broadside view. The buck I had just shot carried a rather small but pretty head of nine points. He was in splendid condition (as were all the mule deer bucks I subsequently shot), the fat over his loins and rump being quite an inch and a half in thickness. He had, too, a lot of inside fat. I have never seen any animals put on so much fat over the loins as do the mule deer bucks in the Rocky Mountains during the autumn months. Their meat is, too, as good as it is possible for meat to be, before it becomes rank, as it does towards the end of October. Of the nine mule deer bucks I have shot I weighed two. The first, a very large and heavy stag—the heaviest I think that I killed—weighed 17 st. 4 lb. clean, after having lain a night out on the hillside. The second, which was certainly smaller and lighter than at least two of the others which I did not weigh, weighed 15 st. 4 lb. clean after having lain out for two nights.

Although bighorn sheep were thinly scattered over the mountains in which we were hunting, I never came across a ram, though when hunting for wapiti close up on the edge of timber line I was often able to look with the glasses over ground where Graham said one might expect to see sheep. One day, however, on returning to our high camp on the top of the pass, my wife told me that our cook had during a climb up the mountain in the morning seen some animals which he was not able to make out, but which he thought were deer. We had not seen a head of game for some days before this, and were just out of meat, so the following morning I went out alone, determined to try and find the animals that our cook had seen the day before and bring one of them back to camp. Following the directions given me, I came, after an hour's climb, on the tracks of the animals our cook had seen the previous day, and saw at once that they had been made by wild sheep, and about an hour later sighted the animals themselves. They were right on the top of the mountain, which presented the appearance of an undulating grassy plain, broken by stony ridges. With my glasses I counted thirteen sheep, and was disappointed to find that they were all ewes. They had evidently been living on this mountain for some time, as their tracks were everywhere



A BIG OLD EWE

to be seen. As the ground was very open and the sheep were constantly moving, feeding along against the wind, I found it very difficult to approach them. At length, however, I managed to kill one—a fine big old ewe with only one horn—and as it was still early resolved to return to camp to get a horse in order to carry the carcase in whole, for the ascent had not seemed too steep for a Western American pony to negotiate. I got back to camp soon after midday, and returned to the dead sheep in the afternoon accompanied by my wife and Graham. We got the



CAMP ON THE DIVIDE AT THE SOURCE OF THE SOUTH FORK OF THE STINKING WATER RIVER

horses up without much difficulty, though we had, of course, to lead them in all the steep places. The top of this mountain, one of the Shoshone range I think, could not have been more than 13,000 feet above sea-level, probably not quite so much. It was a gloriously fine day, without a cloud in the sky, and the air was keen and bracing. When not making any particular exertion, neither my wife nor I experienced any inconvenience from the rarefaction of the air ; but after firing at the sheep in the morning I had found, when trying to make a little run, that the exertion made me puff and blow dreadfully ; in fact I had found that I simply couldn't run.

The view from the spot where the sheep had met its death

was simply glorious, masses of rugged mountains lying all around in every direction as far as the eye could reach; amongst them the jagged peaks of the Teton range, which, owing to the clearness of the air, seemed quite near at hand, though in reality they were many miles distant, standing in bold relief against the clear blue sky. One thing that I missed in this, as in every other view I ever had in the Rocky Mountains, was the sight of vultures, lammergeiers, and eagles circling slowly, yet majestically, overhead, or sweeping swiftly on motionless wings along the rocky faces of the mountains, as one sees constantly in all the mountain ranges of Eastern Europe and of Asia Minor. In the Rocky Mountains, however, vultures and lammergeiers are non-existent, and eagles very scarce; at least I did not see more than three or four during the time I was hunting there, and these were all of one species, smaller, apparently, and a good deal darker in plumage, than our golden eagle.

On October 1 we recrossed the high divide between the Wind River country and the South Fork of Stinking Water. It rained hard all day long and we got thoroughly soaked through, whilst the steep mountain path we were following became, in places, very slippery for the horses. However, the tarpaulins kept our blankets and spare clothes dry, and after we had pitched the tents in a sheltered spot, and made up big fires, we soon got warm and comfortable again. During the night it turned a little colder, and the rain, which still kept falling at intervals, changed to snow on the mountains above us, the glittering white mantle extending to within a few hundred feet of the valley in which we were camped. The sight of snow raised our hopes, for snow is the one thing which the amateur wapiti hunter in the Rocky Mountains learns to pray for, as, after having walked and climbed for perhaps days together without ever seeing a wapiti or a deer, or even the fresh track of one, and perhaps showing, however involuntarily, by his face, something of the disappointment it is impossible to avoid feeling in his heart, he will be sure to hear such words of comfort as 'Wait till we get tracking snow and you'll get all the elk you want, I guess,' or 'The first good snowstorm will drive them out of the higher mountains, and then we shall have a chance to find them'; and so the hope of snow buoys one up, and prevents bitter disappointment turning to dull despair. Personally I believe in the desirability of snow for success in wapiti hunting, for, although the presence

of snow may be immaterial to success, should one have the luck to hear the stags whistling freely—as they always used to do, I believe, during the rutting season—yet if they don't whistle, but only skulk, ever watchful in the dense forests, and there is no new snow to aid one in tracking them, and deaden one's footsteps, it is a difficult matter ever to get a glimpse of one at all.

Our success up to date had not been great. W. M. had shot a wapiti bull and a mule deer buck, whilst I had accounted

PREPARING TO STRIKE CAMP IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS, SEPT. 1897

for two pronghorn bucks, two mule deer (a small buck and a medium-sized stag) and one bighorn sheep ewe. Considering that one does not eat more bull wapiti meat than one can help, and that we were seven in camp (eight, counting a hungry dog), we had so far only just kept ourselves in good meat.

On October 2 I started out with Graham as early as possible into the mountains lying to the north of our camp, whilst W. M. crossed the river with Jinks to hunt along the course of a stream flowing into it from the south.

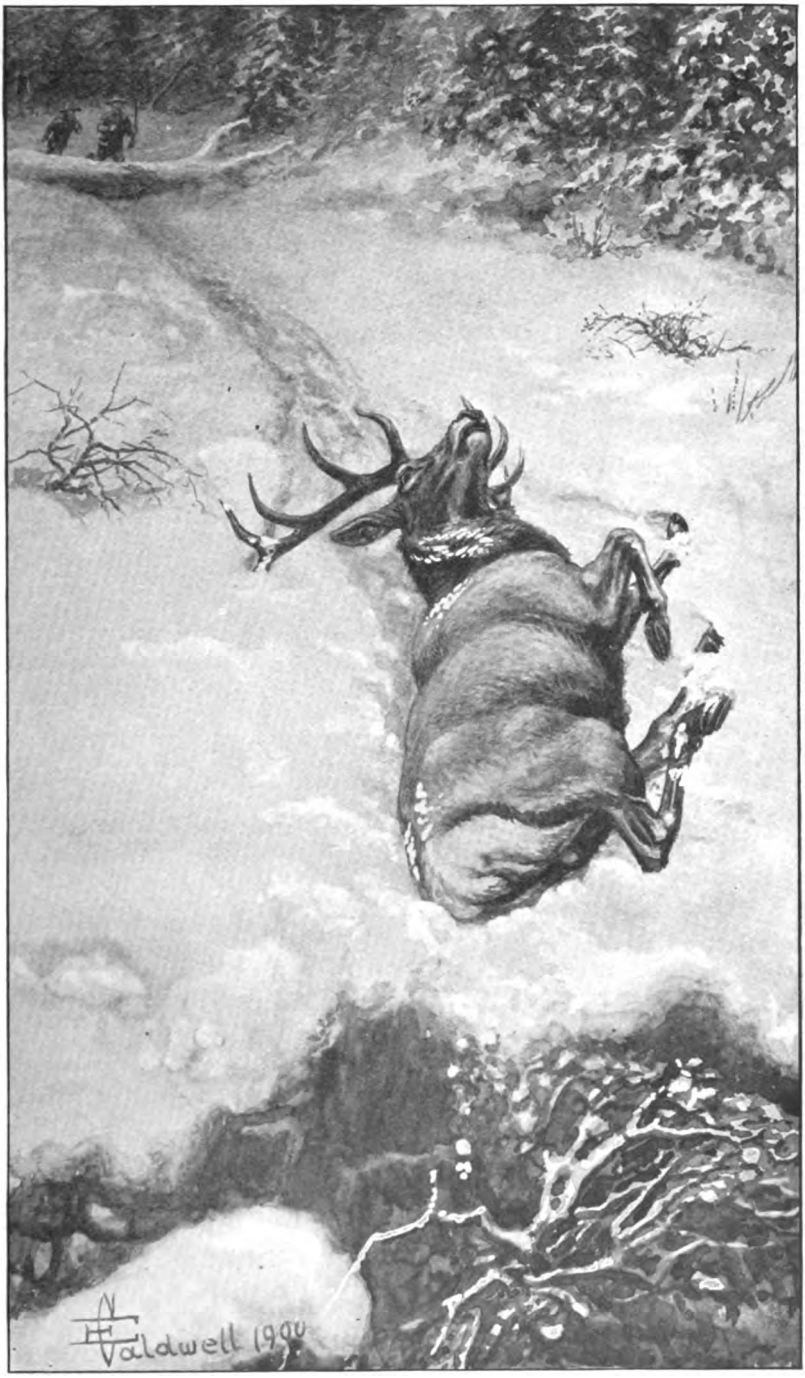
After leaving camp Graham and I climbed steadily up the steep forest-clad slopes immediately above us, and soon got into snow which gradually became deeper and deeper as we climbed higher and higher. We were, I suppose, about 1000

feet above our starting-point, when we came upon the perfectly fresh tracks of a small herd of wapiti, which must have passed late in the night after it had stopped snowing. We first met with these tracks on the side of a very steep hill covered with such thick pine forest that it was often difficult to see more than fifty yards in any direction. Here the snow was about six inches deep, but gradually became deeper as the tracks led us higher up the hillside. As we zigzagged backwards and forwards the wind was sometimes in our favour, sometimes against us, and every moment I expected the tell-tale snow would show us where the keen-scented brutes we were following had winded us and dashed off. Luckily, however, they were farther off than I had imagined, and presently they led us on to the top of a high shoulder of the mountain. Here the snow was quite a foot in depth. They now held along the top of the shoulder towards the main range, always through thick forest. The wind was just as bad as it could be, and at this time I had but little hope of ever seeing our game. At last the wapiti, always ascending, brought us to the verge of timber line, their tracks leading out into a great open valley quite devoid of trees. On our left was a ridge on which grew a few scattered pines, but just where this ridge joined the main range at the foot of a very precipitous rock wall there was a thick cluster of tallish pine-trees, covering perhaps half an acre of ground. Looking at the way the tracks were heading and the inhospitable nature of the surrounding country, Graham and I both felt sure that the wapiti were either lying in the shelter of this piece of timber (the highest in this part of the mountains) or else that they had crossed the ridge and descended into the valley beyond. If they were in the timber, and we approached it by following on their tracks, they were bound either to get our wind or to see us as we crossed the open ground. Indeed, they would probably have done both, and it was no doubt to guard against being followed that they had chosen this spot in which to pass the day, for they proved to be there sure enough. Unfortunately for them, they had not such novices to deal with as they seemed to expect. Having carefully studied the position, my companion and I now left the spoor and, striking to the right, crossed the ridge on which the few scattered trees were growing, about 1000 yards from the thick grove of pines, towards which we made our way, well out of sight and below the wind. When just opposite the grove where we expected the wapiti were lying, we climbed to the top of the ridge. Almost immediately I saw

the head and ears of a wapiti hind amongst the trees. She was looking full at me, and did not take long to size me up, for she swung round and disappeared instantly. I ran forward as hard as I could, making sure I was going to get a shot, as the ground was open all round the cluster of trees. Very soon I saw a hind break cover and make off down the slope of the ridge up which we had just come. I halted immediately and stood perfectly still behind a tree just on the crest of the rise, and I don't think she saw me. She was soon followed by six more hinds and calves, all trotting slowly one behind the other in single file, but for some time no stag showed himself, and I began to think the cunning brute—for certain signs had assured us, as we were tracking the herd, that there *was* a stag with them—must have broken back and dashed off alone across the open ground on the other side of the grove of trees. But no ; after a few seconds of agonising suspense a noble-looking monarch of the mountains walked slowly from the shelter of the pine-trees and followed the ladies of his household, who had now halted about fifty yards down the slope. When they saw him they came trotting along the face of the slope, passing in quite open ground not more than sixty or seventy yards below me, and as the stag followed them I waited until he came past, though he had been well within shot ever since he came out from amongst the trees. As he did not know where I was, and probably had not the least idea why the hinds had trotted off, he came along very leisurely, looking magnificent, for although his antlers were but moderate in size, there were no others of larger proportions near to dwarf them, and even a very ordinary wapiti stag, seen at short range in its native wilds, is a glorious sight to look upon. I let him get a little past me, and then put one of Holland's peg bullets just behind his shoulder low down. I saw by the convulsive rush forwards that he made that he was struck through the heart, but I did not expect so large an animal to collapse so quickly. He had not gone twenty paces after being hit when he fell suddenly right on to the prostrate stem of a large tree, which did not, however, stop him, as the impetus of his fall carried him over it, and he then went sliding at a terrific pace down the steep snow slope below, and disappeared from sight almost immediately. Following as rapidly as possible, we found that he had slid down the steep snow slope about fifty yards, without coming against any tree that might have brought him up, and then gone down an almost precipitous rocky gully. Standing at the top of this and looking down-

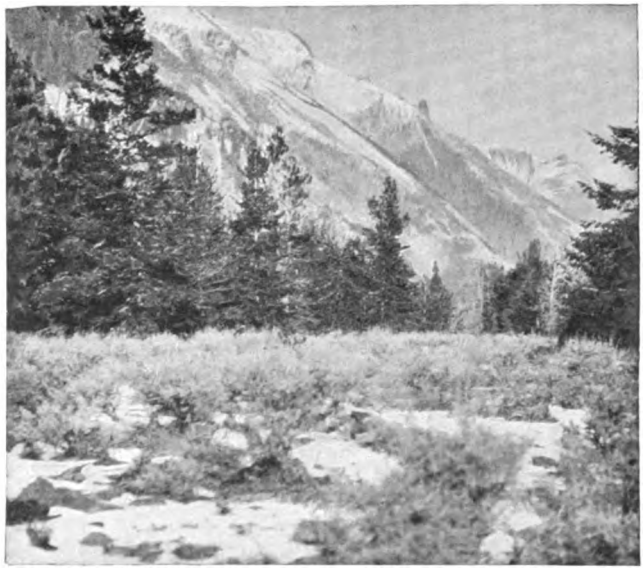
wards my heart died (as the Kaffirs say), for I did not think it possible that a dead animal could fall down such a place without smashing his horns all to pieces. The same thought struck Graham too, for he remarked, 'Well! I be doggoned; he won't have much horns on him when he gets to the bottom of that.' The gully down which he had slid was very rocky, and so steep that we had the greatest difficulty in climbing down it. We ultimately found the dead wapiti at the bottom of it, quite 500 feet below the spot where he had fallen dead and commenced his slide. Strange to relate, only a few inches were broken off the end of one of his antlers; otherwise they were uninjured. His body, however, had been terribly bruised, his hind quarters having scarcely any hair left on them. He had evidently gone down the gully hind end first, and in this way this part of his carcase had received all the heavy bumps, and his horns had only dragged behind. If he had gone down head first nothing could have saved his horns from being smashed to pieces. Though we searched carefully we could not find the piece of horn that had been broken off. But for this accident he would have been a very pretty fourteen pointer of moderate size. I took the skin off his head and neck there and then, and carried it back to camp—with my rifle it made a load of 30 lb.—Graham shouldering the skull and horns, from which we had cut as much meat as possible.

On the following day we again hunted high up on the mountains just on timber line, where the snow still lay about a foot deep, but did not come across any fresh tracks of wapiti or deer. In the afternoon, however, whilst returning to camp we just caught a glimpse of a mule deer buck as he disappeared round a boulder of rock on the slope of a wild ravine, along the top of which we were walking. Although the sides of this ravine were, for the most part, covered with dense pine forest, there were here and there open grass slopes, and rocky places devoid of both grass and trees. It was on one of these open grassy places, from which the snow had already been almost completely melted, owing to its having been exposed all day to the direct rays of the sun, that this deer must have been feeding or lying; but he must have heard us approaching, as we only just saw him disappearing round a boulder of rock. The next day I went out with Jinks, and, thinking that I might find this same buck deer sunning himself in the early morning —for I had heard from Graham that at this season of the year mule deer bucks never wander about, but live very close round



DOWN THE STEEP SNOW SLOPE

some chosen spot—I made straight for the place where I had seen him the previous day. When near the edge of the ravine I advanced alone, and finally crawled on hands and knees to the top of the grass slope, and there sure enough I found the animal I was in search of. He was lying basking in the sunshine, about a hundred yards below me. At first I could only see his head and neck, but, after crawling a little farther forwards, got a view of about half his body. I fired at once and hit him in the back almost between the shoulder-blades. He endeavoured to rise, but only succeeded in tumbling out of his bed and rolling down the steep slope into a cluster of pine-trees. When I got down to him he was not quite dead, so I put him out of pain with another bullet. He proved to be a fine fat buck, with an immensely thick neck, and was altogether fatter and heavier than the first mule deer I had killed. He carried a finer pair of horns, though they were still only of moderate size. Still, such as it was, I was very pleased to add his head to my collection of hunting trophies. As I did not wish to have any of the prime fat meat wasted, I sent Jinks back to camp for a pack-horse, telling him that I would clean the buck and hang all the inside fat on a tree, and then go on hunting by myself. In South Africa one packs an antelope, the size of a mule deer, on a horse whole, either on or behind the saddle, and it takes a strong man to get an animal of that size into position without assistance; but in America it is usual to cut such an animal in two and carry the halves, one on each



SCENE IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS AFTER THE FIRST SNOWFALL, OCT. 1897

side of a pack-saddle, and this I knew Jinks would have no difficulty in doing alone, so, when I had cleaned the deer, I did not consider it necessary to wait for his return. After climbing to the top of the ravine I walked along its edge, keeping, however, within the timber which skirted it, and only coming out of it at those points from which I could get a good view. Presently I came to a boulder of rock, which, jutting out from the edge of the timber, commanded an excellent view not only of that part of the ravine which lay beyond it but also of the mountain side above. I had been sitting on this boulder for some few minutes when, on slightly turning my head, I suddenly saw something that at once arrested my attention high up on the face of the mountain. Here there were many rocks amongst a scattered growth of pine-trees, but there was also something else that did not look exactly like a rock. Half of it was very light in colour, the other half very dark, but though I thought at once that it was a wapiti bull lying down, it was too far off to make quite sure of with the naked eye. I had a very powerful pair of glasses with me, and they at once revealed what appeared to be a grand old wapiti bull lying high up on the mountain side, in such a position that he commanded a view over a vast extent of country below him. His body was very light in colour, and his head and neck very dark. His horns looked large and widespread, and through the glasses I could plainly see the white tips to the tines. He was lying broadside to me, but had his head turned full face, as if he was looking straight at me ; yet I was so far off that I didn't think he could see me. Presently I saw him (through the glasses) turn his head, and I then at once lay flat down on the rock, where I had been sitting, and rolling over and over to its edge, slid down behind it. Then I looked again, with only the top of my head above the rock, and saw that the wapiti was still lying motionless, so I made sure he had not seen me. After having taken very careful note of the ground between us, I then commenced what I made sure was going to be a successful stalk, for, though I had a long way to go, I thought I had plenty of time, and therefore determined to go completely round my would-be victim, climb the mountain well beyond him and come down on him from above. I did all this, and took a long time doing it, as, when I got near the place where the wapiti had been lying, I advanced very slowly, taking every possible precaution not to disturb loose stones or make any noise. But at last I realised that my labour had

been in vain. The wapiti was gone. He had got up and walked off quietly, whilst I was making my way towards him through the thick timber below the shoulder of the mountain. My opinion now is that he saw me when I first climbed on to the rock in the ravine far below him, but, as I was so far away, did not think it necessary to do anything more than keep an eye on me, as long as I was in sight. When, however, I suddenly disappeared, and did not reappear again within a reasonable time, his suspicions were aroused, and to prevent the possibility of an accident he got up and walked off. I have been played the same trick by wild goats (*Capra ægagrus*) in Asia Minor, and some antelopes in Africa. I was soon on the tracks of the lost wapiti, and followed them a long way, but never set eyes on that wise old beast again, for, though he had never run, he had never halted, and at last I had to give him up, and had then got so far away that it was after dark when I reached camp.

VIEW IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS NEAR THE HEAD OF THE SOUTH FORK OF THE STINKING WATER RIVER

Two days later, on October 6, I again went out by myself —the way I really prefer to hunt in the Rocky Mountains—as noiselessness is everything there, and one man makes less noise than two. As the wapiti and deer always seemed to be high up, I ascended first of all to near the edge of timber line, but not getting any tracks in the now fast disappearing snow, crossed over a divide, and then followed the course of a thickly timbered ravine that I knew would lead me into the main

valley of the Stinking Water, not many miles below our camp. About two o'clock I got the fresh track of a wapiti bull, and followed it a long way, but had at last to give it up and strike for camp. It was just getting dusk when I reached a wooded hill just above the path which I knew led up the valley of the Stinking Water to our camp, about four miles distant. Having been walking and climbing since early in the morning I was rather tired, and being so low down (comparatively) had abandoned all further hope of seeing game. However, as I was walking quickly along through the pine-trees, carrying my rifle over my left shoulder, and swinging my hat in my right hand, I suddenly came face to face with a wapiti bull. He was standing amongst some thickish timber looking straight at me. On seeing him I stopped, at the same instant dropping my hat, and swinging my rifle off my shoulder, but even as I did so the wapiti swung round and immediately disappeared amongst the thickly growing tree-stems. I really had but the slightest chance of hitting him, but I fired a forlorn hope of a shot after him, and probably put the bullet into a tree. It was almost too dark then to see blood on the ground amongst the pine needles, but I came back again the next morning and assured myself there was none. As I walked home in the dark I thought what a mockery it was to have had a wapiti presented to me under such conditions. Had I come across him earlier in the day, when I was moving through the forest cautiously with all my senses on the alert, I might have seen him sooner and perhaps got a good chance. However, in the pursuit of all wary game in a forest country, there must inevitably be 'many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip,' and luck will often have more to do with one's success than good management. Still 'it's dogged as does it,' in hunting as in everything else, and, given plenty of time, perseverance is bound to wear down bad luck sooner or later.

(*To be continued.*)

TEACUP TRAGEDIES

BY LADY MIDDLETON

THIS seems a not inappropriate title for a little collection of anecdotes which recount circumstances, insignificant, perhaps, in themselves, but very really tragic to the victims of wonderful Destiny. I have chanced upon many such events, chiefly in localities remote from the haunts of men, and cannot avoid a hope that somehow or somewhere there may be compensation for the victims of unmerited suffering. The high mettled, high strung thoroughbred horse—what a capacity for the anguish of terror such an animal displays! And the dog, whose brutal master—some drover, perhaps—looks on him simply as a machine to an end, chucking him a refuse morsel, and letting him fill up the chinks of hunger with what garbage himself can pick up—how is that faithful heart thrust back upon itself, in the other hunger of longing for word or sign of appreciation from the 'lower animal' who, save for working purposes, ignores the existence of his superior companion!

My husband came in one evening from deer-stalking in Corrie Attadale, Applecross, bringing the account of a tragedy

that had been, and was being, enacted in that scene of wild grandeur.

Attadale is a corrie about three miles long and very wide, with sides in places quite precipitous; a river threads it, and lochans of varied sizes gem its depths. At the top of the corrie, where the rocks were fairly sheer, there hung, about two-thirds of the way down, a ledge, rather broader than others about it, and on it were two white dots, which the telescopes revealed to be sheep, or rather, well-grown lambs. They had evidently been there some time, for the whole ledge was a brown desert, contrasting strangely with the green carpeting of other ledges in the vicinity: every blade had been eaten clean. Far below the rock the glasses showed, at the bottom of a slope of shale and stones, something like a fleece, and on two of the men climbing down, the remains of a sheep, long dead, lay before them. There was no doubt that the the ewe, clambering from ledge to ledge, followed by her lambs, had found herself on a spot whence she could neither get up nor down, and essaying to jump, heavy as she was in full autumn fleece and condition, been either killed on the spot, or died of her injuries within sight of her hapless babes. The poor orphans, not daring the fatal leap, had remained on the ledge, eating every scrap within reach, till at the time of my husband's visit nothing that could support a rabbit remained.

I was in despair, and insisted on going to the place next day to see what could be done. There was little hope, and the wiseacres suggested kindly bullets, for no one could reach the ledge with any chance of rescuing its inhabitants, and the place was too distant and too difficult of access for any such mechanical aids as ladders.

After a ride and scramble of some hours, we reached the head of the corrie, and there happily found that the tragedy was diminishing, for one lamb had vanished, and no signs of it were below; so we guessed that, light with youth and starvation, it had tried the perilous spring, escaping the death its mother's weight and age had dealt her. We now looked hopefully at the remaining derelict on the rock, feeling it would not long remain there lonely; and our hopes were justified, for the next sportsman that visited those solitudes reported the ledge empty.

Sheep are not usually credited with great intelligence, so we trust that nervous terrors formed no part of the sufferings of those poor starvelings. Yet I once knew a sheep show

signs of even reasoning powers. One of a small party, I was walking through some fields in Yorkshire. At one time smaller enclosures, they had merged into a few larger meadows, the hedges broken up into patches, and the ditches becoming mere dips behind them. Sheep and lambs were scattered sparsely about—I think it was in a cold late spring. Suddenly from behind one of the stretches of hedge a solitary ewe ran towards us. Some of the party thought it was our dogs she was running, and 'shoo'd' her away. I noticed that she ran behind the same hedge-fragment, and again came rapidly at us. I and another then fell behind the rest, and watched her, and she came nearer and again ran back, returning to closer quarters.

So evidently did she want us, that we followed, and she led on straight, looking back occasionally to see if we were coming, till she took us behind the shelter, where in the old hollow of the ditch her lamb lay dying. We could do nothing: the little thing was in the last throes; and stroking its wee body, and speaking words of comfort to the poor anxious mother—which I fear she hardly appreciated—we moved sadly away, advising them at the near farm, and learning that it was an epidemic among lambs for which nothing could be done. But that ewe thought we could help her, and such thought is surely reason?

Sheep can be very affectionate. A lamb brought up from birth at the home-farm became the pet of the bailiff's family, and almost lived with them, accompanying the baby in its perambulator like a dog. At last it grew out of lambhood and became a large unwieldy sheep, so it was considered time to sever the pet from its adorers, and it was put with some other sheep in a field near by. But the poor thing had no taste for ovine society, and it simply pined and died.

The same thing happened to a swan of mine which was removed from the house stew-ponds, making way for some Chinese geese, to a pond beside a keeper's house, more pleasant in aspect and surrounding. The swan was found dead very soon after, of no traceable ailment.

From sheep to kangaroos is a jump quite worthy of the latter animals. I have, however, before me a letter from my travelled aunt, 'Eka' Gordon Cumming, with a kangaroo tragedy, too well told, as is her wont, to set down in other words than her own. She was staying in Norfolk.

'This place is ideal, a real old family home . . . and most

delicious woods, just carpeted with wild flowers. A great variety of creatures of all sorts are cherished, and many are so tame that they wander. . . . Three kangaroos with two charming babies live in a large wired yard, but come out occasionally even into the drawing room. Yesterday, alas! one big baby killed a very small cousin. He himself has grown so big (about eight or ten months old) that his mother turned him out of her pouch that she might feed in peace; whereupon he went to his cousin, mother of the younger baby, pulled it out of its cradle, got in himself, drank the dairy dry; and in the morning the poor baby was dead of cold and hunger. Now the murderer has two cradles and two dairies!' He should thrive: a most unedifying moral!

Back again to sheep, because through my mind passes a tale of tradition told to me by the head stalker at Applecross, which would fit better the pen of Fiona Macleod than a common quill. Nay! I take up the plume from a raven's wing now lying across my inkstand—and no better tool exists—hoping that it may inspire the recital of the gloomy tragedy.

The male population of a certain township not far from Lochcarron, in Ross-shire, were out on the arable ground of their holdings, using the cas-crom or wooden plough. It was a fair spring morning in that lovely land, and the workers laboured leisurely with the languor of the west. Suddenly towards them came a black sheep, of such wondrous beauty and seductiveness, that each man felt within him a violent desire to gain the treasure for himself, and with one accord the workers threw their cas-crom aside and set off in pursuit of the coveted seducer. Cunning indeed was the flight of the animal: like to the lapwing, she shortened or lengthened her distance from the hunters, enticing them onward by dip and dale, hill-crest and hollow, through bog and birkwood, till the whole chase, quarry and hunters, disappeared into the grand and savage recesses of Corrie Dol-a-Vhein—one of the so-called 'back' corries of Applecross. At the bottom of this corrie lies a clear lochan in whose glassy deeps the stones could almost be counted through a telescope from the heights above. The bonny black ewe made straight for the water, and at once vanished from view; but where and how none of the peering eyes around its shores could say.

The pursuers, aghast and disappointed, weary and ashamed of their fool chase, now began to accuse each other of misleading, of greed, and folly, till hot words ended in hammer-blows,

SO THAT EACH MAN SLEW OR WOUNDED HIS NEIGHBOUR

and the fight waxed furious and then desperate, so that each man slew or wounded his neighbour. And so complete was the carnage within the gloom of the corrie that never a man of the erewhile friendly crofters returned to work the cascrom within the township of Achnashee.

Now, was that sheep another form of the Water-Kelpie, known usually to superstition in the guise of a black horse, who turned on his hapless rider when taken over water? Or has the tale grown out of very little, in the days when superstitious terrors might have stayed the gauger's foot on his search for illicit stills in the fastnesses of Applecross?

In the world of plumage, as of fur and fleece, one sees these little tragedies, and one I met with last summer includes a trait of fidelity that could put many a biped of higher type to shame. We were, one June morning, riding up the high road through Applecross Forest, when I noticed, sitting close on an edge of grass and heathery sod that trimmed one side of the way, a grouse. Though so near to us, she never moved, and something in her attitude besides this unusual fact striking us as peculiar, we told our companion, a forester, to get off his pony and see. The poor bird was quite cold on her nest; two of the eggs were broken, showing the chicks on the point of hatching. At this stage of incubating the mother bird will never rise, and the cause of the tragedy was apparent. A mob of cattle had passed up the road on its way to market a few days previously. The bird's maternal instinct forbade self-protection by flight, and the pressure of the remorseless hoof did its work, till all life was trampled out of the hopeful mother and her prospective brood. The sad sequel to this roadside tragedy was, that as our dogs ran off the path when we moved on they 'rose' the cock grouse, who flew crowing away. He was either waiting for his mate to bring him their little family, now cold in their shells, or mourning his widowhood upon the mountains. I incline to the latter belief, for the keeper, going up the hill to watch fox-dens later in the season, often noted a lonely cock grouse near the spot; and even at the approach of autumn, my then companion—on stalking bent in that direction—felt sure the poor widower and a solitary bird his cavalcade of stalking-ponies sometimes 'put off' were identical.

By the way, on an island off our coast the recorder of these 'Teacup Tragedies' was very nearly the object of one—a very unpleasant one it would have been, and has caused, in memory, several nightmares. A boatload of us went from the mainland

to picnic on the island; I think seal-shooting was the men's game, while the ladies decided on a white heather hunt—the island was prolific in white heather. Soon I separated from the others, and went round a precipitous part of the island, where the rocks were very sheer, and whereon the heather grew long and luxuriant. I was quite out of sound and sight of the rest, and wandered on, looking at the exquisite views of Skye and mainland, and not finding much white heather. I came rather nearer the edge than I intended, and the heather was quite up to my waist. Suddenly I looked ahead, and only a few paces forward grew a magnificent bush of the coveted flower. I gasped with delight, and gave a sort of draw-back step, the better to plunge forward through the bush and grasp my treasure, when—why, I don't know—I looked into the maze at my feet. There was a great cleft, wedge-shaped, as if nicked by a giant knife out of the rocks and into the land. The high heather met above and concealed it. Had my step been forward instead of back, had I not acted on the *reculer pour mieux sauter* principle, I *must* have plunged down the precipice, and —worst of horrors—stuck halfway, as it narrowed there. The heather would have closed above my head, and the chances were against any one hearing me cry, even had I a voice left. And one pictures possible boatmen in after time being struck with the appearance of a curious white object, stuck up in a cleft of rock, to which some storm had driven them over-near. Returning to examine, the said boatmen might have discovered a few bones, and some relics of—me! Not a nice mode of joining the majority. Perhaps those grand eagles, which we carefully preserve, would have discovered me first.

I know one tiny tragedy of which they were the cause. Donald Mackenzie, forester, told me that he was spying with his glass into Corrie Glas, a small corrie, high and open, up the glen of the river Croshan, not very far from Applecross House itself. He noticed a little troop of deer running in his direction, and wondered what made them run, but soon noticed they were being chased by a pair of eagles—golden eagles. The birds seemed to single out a little calf some six months old. 'For near half an hour,' said Donald, 'the birds chased the luckless beastie about, swooping at it, one after other' (alternately), striking at its head; the poor mother hind left, agonised and helpless, by the flying herd, a spectator of her child's torment. At last Donald saw blood pouring from the calf's neck, and then (why not sooner?) began to run and shout in the hope of scaring the

eagles. After much 'baaling oot,' as he expressed it, he succeeded in frightening the birds, who must have been pressed by hunger and were very bold. They slowly soared aloft, and the poor hind went up to her now prostrate baby, and Donald left them alone. But going the next day to the scene of the assault, he found the calf dead with horrible wounds in its neck.

Wounds, indeed, an eagle claw can deal, as another of the stalkers could testify to his dole. He found a fine female eagle caught by the claw in a fox-trap. As the birds are preserved on our estate, he tried to emancipate her without injuring her, but she just fixed the talons of the free claw in the man's thigh and he had almost to throttle her before he got quit of the savage clutch. It was a noble vengeance to allow 'Iolaire' after that to soar into her native blue.

On Benyenevich, in Skye, some crofters were at work, probably gathering peats. One couple laid their sleeping baby on the hillside while they worked near by. Suddenly an eagle swooped, pounced on the child, and, before the aghast parents could interfere, carried it up aloft. The bird actually bore its burden over the sound between Skye and Raasay, and deposited it upon the latter island. There, some inhabitants had noticed the eagle, and were puzzled as to what she was carrying, so they hurried to the place of her descent, and found the child quite unhurt.

It was a big child, perhaps two years old, said my informant. The fact that it was a windy day, and that the bird got a 'lift' at the moment trying to rise with such a weight, alone accounts for the eagle getting off with so heavy a prey.

The tragedy here lay only in the feelings of the unhappy parents till their child was restored to them, for the catastrophe was mercifully averted. In such wise a blue hare met salvation.

A forester went to set a fox-trap, and took his gun to kill a bait therefor. A blue hare got up rather far away, but he fired both barrels, and deeming it hit, let go a collie dog that accompanied him, which chased the hare out of sight. In a short time pursuer and puss returned on their tracks. Then the man beheld two eagles on the skyline, apparently following on after the hare; and when within about three hundred yards of her, one of the birds swooped, caught the beast, and flew overhead with its prey. The forester shouted loudly when they were within gunshot, and the eagle dropped the hare, which fell on its feet and bolted into a near cairn.

Another time, this forester (the Donald Mackenzie of the calf tragedy) was watching for poaching boats on the Applecross coast, when he saw swimming on the sea a black skart, or cormorant. In the bird's mouth was a large fish which it was struggling to swallow, but ineffectually. Suddenly Donald heard a 'swish' of wings overhead, an eagle dashed down at the bird, and, snatching the fish from its bill, flew off with the poor cormorant's dinner. They tell tales of hapless salmon caught in traps set for seagulls, in Skye; but perhaps the exchange of prey was not unprofitable to the trappers.

Dogs, our friends and close companions, perhaps rendered by generations of contact with humanity more acute of feeling than the general 'brute' world, afford countless tales of tragedy. One, I recollect, had for its subject a tiny toy terrier, who divided the affections of his mistress with a huge St. Bernard, or mastiff—it was so long ago that I forget. Big dog and little dog were devoted friends, and romped joyfully together, the big friend treating his tiny chum with that wonderful gentleness that shows true sympathy. Sometimes, however, the terrier's spirits overcame him, and he continued teasing and sham fighting long after the big one had cried 'Pax!'

A warning growl generally gave pause; but one fatal day the wee dog was very 'cussed and contrairy,' and several warnings were only followed by further aggressions. The giant, intending a sharper admonition, then gave a snap. Alas! the great jaws achieved what their owner never contemplated, and crushed the little friend as one would crush a gnat. I believe the distress of the monster was human, as he walked round the tiny corpse, sniffing, and whining in grief and unmistakable astonishment that no effort called forth one sign of recognition or play.

A connection of ours, visiting us in Yorkshire, brought with her a small pug puppy. We had warned her that our home dogs might not show due courtesy to strangers—and she told her maid to keep the doggie upstairs. By-and-by, however, the ward relaxed, and the puppy came down. An old black collie, like the St. Bernard of the former tale, growled caution, but the pup was quite obtuse, and the more we flicked it away, the more it charged 'Gillie's' ears. The sleeper woke to snap, and poor pug got such a bite in the head that it's eye was half gouged out. Confusion and grief! Forth came a carriage, and, escorted by a bevy of sympathetic ladies' maids, the puppy was solemnly driven off to the family doctor, who, unaware

FIXED THE TALONS OF THE FREE CLAW IN THE MAN'S THIGH

that the drug is highly dangerous to dogs, chloroformed the patient, and put the eye in. But the puppy never came to, and its grieving mistress only got back the small cold body.

A relative tells me that chloroform in *small* doses need not be fatal to dogs.

My father owned a retriever called Rose. She was a great favourite, and expecting a family (date uncertain), she was the object of much interest. Her master had occasion to drive some seventeen miles to another home of his, to which the whole establishment was shortly moving, and he took some servants and, I think, two conveyances and Rose with him. When he returned home in the evening, he found the dog was with neither carriage, and realised that she had been left behind. He sent back next day, but no one knew anything of the dog: Rose was lost. It was a matter of great anxiety, a real trouble to my father, and there was a hue and cry, but no result.

On, I think, the third day afterwards, the move was made by the whole family to the other house. Some one was occupied, either that evening or next morning, in the entrance hall, and heard sounds like squeaks. The house was old, and not free of rats, so at first the noise was little heeded. But later, the squeaks continuing, my father was summoned and heard them. At once a light broke upon his mind, and fetching the key, he opened the door of a small wine-cellar giving out of the hall; and there lay Rose in a bin, with a fine family of puppies. The poor mother, feeling her time come, had retired into seclusion when her master had opened the door, and there had lain without bit or drop for three days at least. She was no worse for the adventure, and lived to meet a sad end.

One day, when the coverts were being shot, one of the guns aimed at something moving behind a bush where he thought a hare had gone, and shot Rose. She came at him savagely, and the keeper hastily shoved a stick between her open jaws, biting which she fell dead.

A boy nephew of ours went grouse shooting over a large extent of hill-ground belonging to the crofter townships on the seaboard, where they run sheep and some 'horses,' as they call their ponies. The dogs called attention to something unusual, and on going to see, they found in a bog the remains of a pony. The poor brute had evidently fed on the bog where green patches showed, till, reaching the centre, it must have felt its foothold shake, and instead of retrogressing, as a human being retaining presence of mind would have done, it

had plunged forward and sank in a part that had no holding surface. There the animal, exhausted by struggles, proved by the marks around, must have slowly starved to death. Close by that place is a loch, in which grows a succulent reed, the 'equisetum.' This loch is the tomb of many a sheep adventuring into the treacherous boggy bottom in search of the titbit.

Perhaps this reed led to the undoing of the 'corn stag,' a fine youth who found his way into the farm lands of Applecross and thrived greatly in a cornfield that lay over the river, and rather out of the way. When chased away, he took refuge in a young plantation betwixt arable and hill, returning at leisure to his pasture. The farm manager was indignant, and tried to persuade 'the lord' to slay this marauder. But, as he was such a fine youngster, and so forward in condition because of good keep, I felt his value would be even greater to the forest than the feast, and begged him off.

The following year the stag, finer and fatter still, was to the fore in his old haunts, and again I proved his salvation. Alas! that very next spring his carcase was found in a bog on quite another part of the ground. Why he had wandered so far afield, or rather a-forest, was not known, unless, waiting for his corn diet, he had sought the equisetum delicacy, and, like the sheep, fell a victim to its allurement.

Many and many such 'teacup tragedies' could be chronicled, but space lacks, and I will only set down one more which, if not actually tragical in its ending, caused anxieties that almost deserved the term.

A crofter, one Alexander G., from the township of Kalakiel, Applecross, took a pony to sell at Lochalsh Market. He crossed the Bealloch of Applecross, a hill road, and slept that night at the house of a stalker at Rishell. The following day he pursued his way and reached the market. There he appears to have lost his pony, and he set off ostensibly to search for it. The pony was found by some other persons, but the man Alexander G. himself effectually disappeared. For a whole week the search was carried on, near his home and afar, but never a sign or a sound of the missing man. He had absolutely vanished; and at last they gave him up as lost. Twenty-one days after his disappearance, a shepherd, one Donald M., from Fernig, found him in a burn above his (the shepherd's) house, sound asleep. It was a deep-lying stream, said my informant, namely, one with rocky and precipitous banking, and the sleeper lay beside the water. Help was procured, and Alexander G. was

lifted out 'from a difficult, bad place.' He was very weak, but only expressed a wish to drink, which he did.

When sufficiently restored after his long fast, he told his audience that he had been aware of the searchers moving about, but did not realise that it was he they sought. He said he had drunk of the burn water, but never moved from the same spot. He slept nearly always, and of course had no food. This was all the account he could give of himself.

What had happened? It was hardly a trance, as he appears at times to have been conscious. Could he have fallen down the 'difficult, bad place' and been long unconscious, till sounds of search made him realise the want that took him to the burn water?

They say he had been melancholy and complained of loss of memory for some time previous to his adventure. He was a fine, handsome man, perhaps about forty years old, and lived some years after this event. Two children were added to his family, but he was useless for work, and, in the language of my informant, 'never did another turn.'

THE DUFFER

BY L. H. DE VISME SHAW

HE fired both barrels at a flock of wild geese rather more than half a mile above us, and then, with a look of mingled disappointment and surprise, stood gazing after them as though there were still a chance of two or three wounded ones dropping out of the file. When the birds were nearly lost to sight, we suggested that he should re-load and give them another dose. But he did not countenance the idea—he thought we were joking. Shortly afterwards he explained to us that when shooting at a bird more than a hundred yards away, he always aimed at one of the wings. 'You can often,' he said, 'break a bird's wing a long way off; whereas if you hit it in the body at the same distance you only wound it, and don't get it after all. That's why I aim at the wing.' Before we parted that day he had dropped his gun twice, and let it off by accident three times.

This was the first time we ever met him.

There are few people who have not run across the duffer somewhere or another during their wanderings in search of sport. He turns up at the most unexpected times and in the

most unexpected places ; he assumes well-nigh every imaginable guise. Though frequent meetings have rendered us familiar—alas ! too familiar : do not those four pellets still lie slumbering in the depths of our calf ?—with the duffer and his ways, and though we have compiled, strictly for our own guidance and preservation, a table of signs and tokens by which he may generally be distinguished from other mortals, still we confess that at times both our notes and our instinctive perspicaciousness fail us entirely, and some new acquaintance whom at first meeting we have assured ourselves is *not* the duffer turns out to be the duffer after all. The discovery necessitates further entries in our table.

The most observant of men, the greatest student of character, finds himself wrong at times.

The study of the duffer is the study of a lifetime.

Not so very long ago we met him at a big shoot. We never dreamed that it was he—indeed, he was so utterly unlike any other incarnation of the duffer whose lot it has been to cross our path, that we did not think of referring to the table at all. There was a businesslike rough-and-readiness about his appearance which took our eye at first glance. Cord breeches, stout pigskin leggings, heavy boots, and a knitted scarf in the place of a collar—these were what the duffer wore—generally lead us to mark the man as a hardened sportsman, and to look for something pretty straight in the way of shooting.

He shook hands heartily when introduced. 'Just back from the Cape,' he said. 'Practising out there—Bar, you know. Been slaving away six years without a break. Bit raw to the gun, I dare say—still, deuced glad to have a turn at the old game. Going through with the beaters ; X. [our host] says he don't object. Tame work outside. *You* get the birds—*I* get the sport. Rocketers, my boy ! I'd sooner kill one rocketer than twenty straight 'uns. Too rough for some of you dandies, I suppose '—and he glanced rather scornfully at our stockings.

'Mind you hold straight,' were his parting words as he hurried away to overtake the beaters.

At that moment we noticed for the first time something peculiar in the way he carried his gun—that indefinable *something* which always marks the novice. But we paid small heed to the sign : we were off our guard.

Fifteen minutes later we saw him coming triumphantly towards us carrying a cock pheasant *by the tail.* In a moment we knew him for what he was. We turned mournfully away.

'Finest shot I ever made in my life,' came his cheery voice. 'The very deuce of a rocketer—ninety yards good—dead as a stone, too. Why don't you get inside next drive?'

He never killed that cock at all. A beater who walked beside him informed us that it was a bird which broke back and was bowled over by the corner gun, falling inside the cover. The duffer pounced upon it, and made it his own. This same beater once more unburdened his soul to us at the close of the day: 'I've been 'side of him right through, sir; I've seen every shot he had; an' I'll swear he never hit so much as one of 'em. An' there he is a-sayin' he's killed forty-three! I don't know what sort of a gentleman you calls such as him.'

Quite recently we met the duffer out ferreting. There was no difficulty in recognising him this time. At the moment of our arriving on the scene he was vainly trying to stop a rabbit with his hammers at half-cock.

As we stood within twenty yards of him waiting the moment when Mr. Buckman should break away and offer a shot, there suddenly came shrill squeals from a bolt-hole midway between ourselves and the bank. Like lightning did the duffer fly to the spot. He flung himself down at full length, and thrust his hand into the hole. A wild yell rent the air.

Shaking was no good, so, in agony and despair, he seized the ferret with his left hand and tore it away. Presumably the animal swallowed that square quarter of an inch of trigger-finger. Anyhow, its whereabouts was never discovered.

We recommended home, cotton-wool and tincture of myrrh. The duffer took our advice. We saw him no more that day. Ferrets will slip their muzzles sometimes.

The duffer is often a creature of impulse.

We were beagling. The cover—something over a hundred and fifty acres in extent—was a mixture of furze and four-year-old hazel, with just a scattered score or two of fine old oaks. It bordered the high road, on the opposite side of which lay a second cover, under different ownership. What pheasants there were had been cleared off early in the season, each owner—they were bitter foes—exerting himself in right manly fashion to bag the other's birds, and getting all he could lay his hands on by fair means or foul. Between the two the pheasants had rather a rough time.

We stood in a drive which cut through the top end of the cover. The dogs had worked away—we could hear them running a rabbit far down towards the bottom of the wood.

Intending to follow them up, we betook ourselves to the road, but before we had gone a hundred yards they ran off the scent, and all was silence. We stopped abruptly. Developments hung fire. It seemed a fitting moment for a pipe.

As we stood with pipe in one hand and pouch in the other, there came a sudden scampering sound from within the wood. Before ever we had time to rid our hands of their encumbrances, a hare burst from the cover, dashed across the road almost at our feet, and disappeared in the bracken on the opposite side. At the same moment we became aware of a mighty crashing and breaking of twigs in the direction whence she had come. We seized upon our gun, and stood prepared—if not alarmed.

But it was only the duffer—a youthful incarnation this time, an incarnation still at Cambridge, an incarnation wearing a *pince-nez* and an abnormally high collar. One hand guarded his face—the other held his gun high in the air: with heroic fixity of purpose did he force his difficult way. He leaped the bordering furzes like a deer, and stood panting in the road.

'Where—where did it go—the hare?' he asked with breathless emotion as he caught sight of us.

'There.' We pointed to a well-used run up which the hare had gone.

Quick as thought the duffer's gun flew to his shoulder. Bang! bang!—both barrels in rapid succession. He bounded to the spot; he kicked the shattered bracken to right and left; he examined every inch of ground within ten or a dozen yards of the point where his charges had struck. And then once more he turned towards us.

'I didn't get it,' he said with a bland smile, readjusting his *pince-nez* at the same time.

'No?' We spoke absently—we were just lighting up.

'I always shoot where they go in,' he continued. 'They must stop *somewhere*, and of course you can never tell where they *are* going to stop. You might get one like that sometimes, mightn't you?'

A pet idiosyncrasy of the duffer is that of keeping his gun continually pointing towards your head. He is fond, too, of knocking over rabbits within a few inches of your feet. He cracks ungainly jokes and laughs loudly while walking the turnips; and should a half-grown pheasant get up, he invariably bowls it over, however bad a shot he may be. And then he utterly refuses to believe that it *is* a pheasant. If you persist in

your classification, he generally turns sulky. Sometimes he will lose his temper altogether and go straight home—taking the bird with him.

Many and diverse are the incarnations of the duffer. From prince to ploughman, from peer to pars— Ah! that reminds us. Even in the cloth may one find him.

This duffer was curate in charge; he lived at the rectory. Opposite his bedroom window was a rookery, the denizens of which heralded each dewy dawn with a clamouring chorus of croaking caws. The duffer was a light sleeper.

His profession, of course, forbade that he should let off steam after the usual fashion—it precluded him from levelling anything but the mildest terms of reproach towards his tormentors. But a stifled fire will sometimes burst into sudden flame. It was so in the duffer's case—the situation had become unbearable. Though he might not swear, it was not forbidden him to slay. In a moment of inspiration, he vowed that retribution—retribution swift and terrible—should fall upon those feathered fiends.

The farmer was out. His wife, however, undertook to explain the duffer's requirements—the loan of a gun and enough ammunition for one shot. She would have given him the weapon then and there but that she was frightened out of her very life at the sight, let alone the touch, of a gun. Her husband should be sure and run across with it and leave it at the rectory directly he got back from market.

The duffer, in theory, knew all about guns. He knew the use of the ramrod; he knew the powder should go in first; he knew exactly the place where the cap had to be put on—in fact, he felt thoroughly at home when, dinner being finished and the table cleared, he started upon the task of loading.

There was something wrong with the powder-flask—it would only let out just a small quantity at a time. By keeping it inverted, however, and working the lever up and down, he at last succeeded in transferring its contents to the gun barrel. Then came the wadding, which he rammed carefully home. He was rather surprised to find that the powder only filled about twelve or thirteen inches of the barrel; he had always had the idea that a properly proportioned charge should be half powder and half shot, bulk for bulk, and that the two together should reach the muzzle. Of course it was possible that the farmer, knowing the purpose for which his gun was required, had only measured out a small charge.

When the duffer had put in the shot and rammed down the top wad, there still remained about six inches of empty barrel. He could not help thinking that the owner of the gun *must* have made some mistake, and given him a short allowance of powder. Perhaps, though, the explosive might be of more than ordinary strength—if this were the case, the apparent disproportion was easily explained. But what about that six-inch vacuum? In the midst of his reasonings he glanced at the surplus wads. There lay the solution of the difficulty! He rammed them home one by one. They exactly filled the barrel. The farmer had made no mistake after all.

At break of day the duffer slipped from his bed and gently opened the window.

Killed?—not a bit of it. He only lost three fingers and a merely insignificant portion of jaw.

We once met the duffer in the guise of a retired manufacturer. He bought a large property, and set himself steadily to master the intricacies of country pursuits.

The first time we shot with him was on the opening day of September. We still have acute recollections of that meeting. He had not by then grasped the why and wherefore of a pointer's existence.

'Come be'ind, sar! Confound you, sar, come be'ind!' he cried excitedly as the dog started forward.

Before we had gone fifty yards into the turnips, he signalled a halt and beckoned the keeper.

'I'm going to send that dog 'ome, he said to us. 'I've been confoundedly swindled. I gave thirty guineas for the brute, and he won't obey a word I say. Look at him now!—he's found a bone or something.'

The dog was standing. As the keeper, carrying out his orders, was adjusting the chain, a covey rose almost at his feet. We did not feel equal to remonstrance or explanation.

We next met this duffer early in October. The day was to be opened by driving a long narrow cover, throughout the length of which ran a tiny clear-as-crystal stream. We, the duffer and ourselves, stood at the top end, while the two other guns, who were to walk up the outsides, started off in the track of the beaters.

Scarcely had the sound of the keeper's whistle died away when the cry of 'Cock!—Cock for-'ard!' reached our ears.

'What's he calling?' said the duffer hurriedly.

'Woodcock,' we answered. 'Look out.'

A second or two afterwards, a kestrel appeared above the top of the pines. The bird swerved suddenly towards us as it caught sight of the duffer. But the duffer was equal to the occasion. He took careful aim, and brought the bird down as dead as a stone.

The drive over, he hurried to his victim. He picked it up and examined it closely. Then he came towards us, radiant with smiles.

'Awfully glad I got it,' he said; 'first one I ever shot at. What pretty feathers, aren't they? I always heard woodcocks had funny beaks, but I never knew they'd got yellow legs before. I shall send it straight 'ome to be got ready for dinner.'

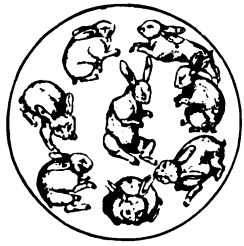
Let us conclude by narrating the feat of a duffer who—the case is a rare one—knew that he *was* a duffer, and, more, was wont to make merry o'er the fact. By no dint of practice could he hold the gun straight. Not that he always missed—his average was sometimes as high as one bird per one hundred cartridges. And great was the rejoicing when that one bird reached the ground.

It was a day at the back-end of the season, a rough day, with a bag of about forty cocks. Nothing remained but a small plantation right against the head keeper's cottage.

'You can shoot hens here, sir,' said the keeper.

The keeper was a bit of a wag. He felt no fear for the safety of his cherished birds.

We forget the exact number of hens in that plantation. Whatever it was, however, the duffer bagged the lot.



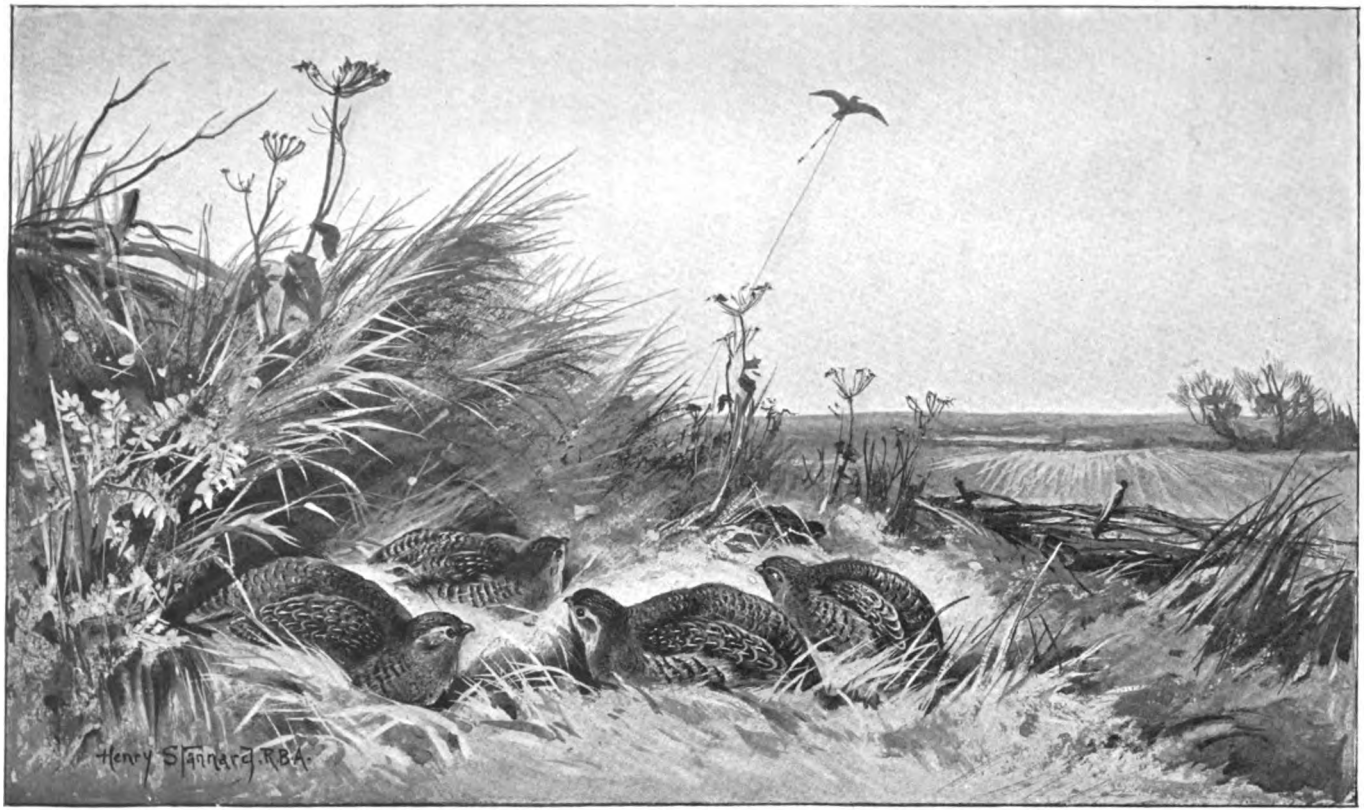
PAGES FROM A COUNTRY DIARY

Feb. 1.—Coming down to breakfast this morning I found a letter from my friend Snapshot urgently pressing me to come over for a final day's partridge shooting under a kite; an invitation of which, at first sight, I was by no means inclined to avail myself. In the first place the weather was not of a nature to tempt a sportsman of mature years to brave the elements; it was, to quote Charles Kingsley, 'a soulless, skyless, catarrhal day—when a cold suck of wind just proved its existence, by toothache on the north side of all faces,' which I had intended to devote to wiping off arrears of correspondence, varied with occasional tobacco in a comfortable armchair by my own fireside: secondly, my recollections of shooting partridges under a kite, a form of sport I had not indulged in for nearly twenty years, were not such as to tempt me to renew them; while, in addition, I have a sort of apologetic feeling that all game, but especially partridges, has earned a respite by February 1. Moreover, I have always looked on the attempt to circumvent game by means of a kite as a kind of better-class poaching only practised by fanatics like Snapshot.

But husbands propose and wives dispose, and Belinda at once decided that it would do me far more good to be out shooting than 'stewing' over the smoking-room fire; and consequently the dog cart was ordered round and I was packed

off, *nolens volens*, to my day's sport. By the way, how curious it is that even the best of women all seem of opinion that a man has no right to indulge in any form of recreation except severe physical exercise; an inherent idea which must have been handed down through successive feminine generations, from the prehistoric times when existence depended on the head of the family's skill in hunting.

It is fortunate that such a state of things no longer exists, or, judging by the performances of some of the people I meet out shooting, there would be a good many poor children who would go very hungry. Arrived at Snapshot's I found him in a state of jubilant excitement over a new and very hideous kite just arrived from London, the sight of which he assured me would cause the partridges to seek the shelter of the hedgerows, where they would lie like stones, until we kicked them up. Accordingly we sallied forth full of anticipation, the kite struggling and straining in the hands of a grinning, but evidently sceptical, stable boy. I can truthfully assert that the effect of this infernal invention on the partridges was electrical; every covey in the neighbourhood was at once on the alert, but, so far from seeking to hide themselves in the hedgerows, they flew high over the tops of them, and in most cases continued their flight beyond the confines of my host's estate. Consequently the greater portion of the day was spent in walking over sticky fallows in vain pursuit of them, while Snapshot and his keeper alternately bawled directions to the youth in charge of the kite—who early lost all interest in the day's proceedings. Once, indeed, when struggling through a thick overgrown fence we did walk into a small covey on which the kite had produced its proper effect, and it was certainly curious to note the behaviour of the panic-stricken birds, which lay until we were actually trampling among them. One flew shrieking within a foot of my head, another doubled round the keeper's legs, and all of them, dodging and twisting like snipe, went straight into the recesses of a neighbouring wood. Under the circumstances I was not sorry that we had withdrawn our cartridges before scrambling through the fence; especially in view of the fact that my friend rather prides himself on being 'quick on his bird.' Our bag at the end of the day was but four brace, and more than ever convinced that it is unsportsmanlike to shoot partridges under a kite, I returned home in no very good humour, which Belinda unjustly attributed to my having shot badly.



THE PANIC-STRICKEN BIRDS

Feb. 4.—Walking this Sunday afternoon in a quiet part of the woods I chanced on what, for want of a better term, I must describe as a fox's summer-house or arbour, most artfully concealed under a heap of fir loppings. It lay on the slope of a little clearing where it caught the full force of the morning sun : it was perfectly proof against wind or rain ; a little purling stream ran within a few yards of it, and lined with warm dry bracken it formed an ideal retreat for an elderly fox of luxurious habits. Alas ! that I should have to add that the heads of two cock pheasants—probably winged birds caught after the last covert shoot—and the skeletons of sundry rabbits proved that the owner of this charming sylvan residence did not only resort to it for the purpose of meditation.

A propos of foxes, a good story reaches me from the X.-country, which lies in one of the Home counties. Like many other hunting countries this possessed an 'old customer,' an enormous dog-fox, which, after defying all attempts to bring about its destruction in the legitimate manner, at length died a natural death of sheer old age. Its corpse was found by a gamekeeper, and sent to the secretary, a well-known ornament of the Stock Exchange, who despatched it to London to be stuffed. In course of time, duly set up in a glass case, it was returned to him at his city office, whence he conveyed it by train to his residence in the country. Travelling in the same carriage with him were two or three brother members of the Hunt, who, learning the contents of their friend's unwieldy parcel, begged for a peep at them. Accordingly the brown paper wrappings were removed from the case, and the 'old customer,' grinning over the stereotyped rabbit, duly criticised and admired. Seated in a corner of the compartment was an elderly, inoffensive-looking stranger, who in turn asked to be allowed to inspect the work of art. Permission was, of course, readily accorded by the delighted secretary, and after a careful and minute examination, the old gentleman politely remarked, 'A remarkably fine specimen. *Your own shooting, I presume, sir?*'

Feb. 8.—To-day I have been shooting woodpigeons, a sport that in my opinion ranks only second to grouse driving. It has been bitterly cold, with a strong north-east gale, accompanied by driving snow-squalls ; weather in which the woodpigeons in the neighbourhood invariably shelter in a certain fir plantation, for which after an early lunch I set forth, attended by old Sam the retriever. Crossing the open the squalls of wind were so violent

and so piercingly cold that I could hardly struggle against them, but once inside the wood the force of the wind was completely broken by the thick belt of Scotch firs and spruces, and although I could hear the gale roaring away overhead, I might almost as well have been inside a house for all I could feel of its violence. Small wonder that woodpigeons, and, indeed, all wild creatures, make for such plantations in this bitter weather, while their value as a shelter for stock can hardly be over-estimated. Crossing the park I noticed that even the hardy West Highland bullocks had got under the lee of a belt of firs, and were standing with patient lowered heads, tail-on to the icy blast.

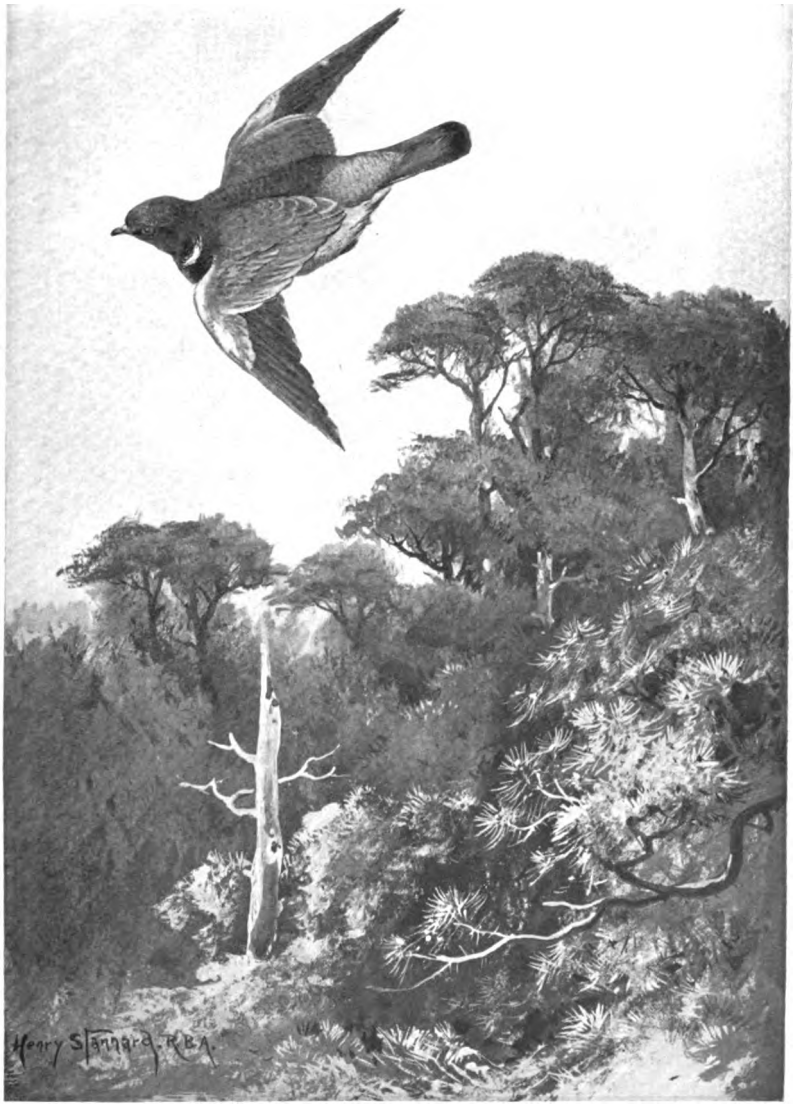
To loiter about in a wood has always been one of my chief pleasures on account of the opportunity it gives one of watching wild animals and birds, but to-day was rather too cold for much to be astir. A starved-looking hare hopped in ungainly fashion down a ride, occasionally stopping to crop half-heartedly at the tufts of withered grass. It looked very cold and miserable, and recalled Keats's perfect lines to me:

> St. Agnes-eve! Ah! bitter cold it was,
> The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass.

It had hardly disappeared ere a squirrel swung itself into a neighbouring tree, and spying me began to chatter and swear in most outrageous fashion, no doubt warning the neighbourhood that a horrid man with a gun was about, and evidently up to no good. Nor was its warning without effect; a minute or two later the harsh cry of an unseen jay and the impudent chuckle of a blackbird showed that the hint had been taken.

Next a tiny blue-tit settled on a pine stem almost within reach of my hand, but while I was watching it methodically probe every cranny of the bark in search of food, and thinking how uncomfortable it must be to dine in such peripatetic fashion, a 'flickering' of wings made me look up just in time to see a woodpigeon beating steadily in against wind exactly over my head. Quickly as I threw up my gun the pigeon was quicker still; one stroke of its wing and it was away down the gale at a speed no express train could rival, while the charge of shot I had intended to catch it exactly in the head merely tore its way through a promising young Scotch fir, covering me with pine needles.

Although I don't like missing, this is the sort of thing that to me constitutes the great charm of woodpigeon shooting.



THE PIGEON WAS QUICKER STILL

You pit your own skill and cunning against one of the craftiest and wildest birds that flies, and unless you play every move in the game correctly the pigeon will beat you. Two apparently simple axioms are essential to success: one, not to keep your face turned up to the sky—nothing shows so plainly against the dark background of the trees, or scares the pigeons more—and the other, to remain perfectly motionless until you throw up your gun to fire; but both are easier preached than practised.

I made many mistakes of this sort this afternoon, but was quite satisfied with my bag of nineteen pigeons. I admit that these were only obtained at the cost of sixty-one cartridges, but I took every chance that presented itself, and did not pick my shots. By the way, more than half of the birds were of the smaller migratory variety that appears in flocks during the winter, and which is locally described as 'furriners.' I have never yet been able to satisfy myself where these birds come from; they are popularly supposed to migrate here from Denmark, but I cannot ascertain the grounds for this belief. No doubt a few breed in this country, but not in sufficient numbers to account for the large flocks which appear and disappear every year.

Perhaps some of my readers more learned in ornithology than myself can enlighten me? An examination of the crops of half a dozen of the birds showed them in every instance to be simply crammed with young clover shoots; the loss to farmers from the depredations of woodpigeons in hard weather must be enormous. I feel I have rendered a service to agriculture, while, moreover, I have the pleasing certainty that to-morrow I shall feast on woodpigeon soup; most delicious of all game *purées*.

Feb. 11.—To-day I walked over to lunch with the A.s, who have just returned from spending several months on the Irish property they unexpectedly inherited last year. They are both delighted with the place; A. appears to have had some really magnificent cock shooting, while his wife is absolutely enthusiastic about the Irish, and full of anecdotes of their good humour and cleverness. One of her stories is, I venture to think, worth repeating. Mrs. A. is intensely devoted to animals, and insisted on taking a number of her pets to Ireland with her. Amongst them was a cage full of squirrels, animals, it appears, that are not indigenous to Connemara, and which excited the most intense astonishment among the natives of the district. Before returning to England the A.s gave a party to

their tenants and the general proletariat of the neighbourhood. Chief among the former was a certain old Peter Joyce, who, in virtue of being the oldest and most insolvent tenant on the estate, had to sit next to Mrs. A. at supper. Now Peter had never seen her squirrels, but their fame had travelled across miles of bog and mountain to his cabin, and he was very curious about them. Moreover, he felt they would form an admirable topic wherewith to start the flow of small talk so many of us have a difficulty in producing at dinner, and consequently he deferentially inquired, 'An' how's yer little *swivils* gettin' on, Mem?' 'My little what?' demanded the astounded Mrs. A. 'Yer little swivils,' repeated old Joyce, and then seeing he was still misunderstood he explained, '*thim little bastes like rats wid foxes' tails!*'

Feb. 19.—To-day I walked over at the request of a hunting friend, to interview my neighbour, Mr. Tiplady, a small farmer who had announced his intention of putting up barbed wire on his holding. He is a cross-grained old fellow, an immigrant into these parts from the far north, and the tenant of some hundred acres of bad land, the property of a college at Cambridge. Twice a year a solicitor comes down from London to extract what proportion of the rent he can from the unwilling Tiplady, who otherwise is allowed absolute control over his farm. Consequently this is in the direst state of neglect and bad cultivation, untrimmed fences, ill-hung gates, uncleaned ditches, and some starved pastures on which a few unhappy looking beasts strive fruitlessly to get a meal. But agriculture is not the only source to which Mr. Tiplady looks for a livelihood: his farm is wedged in between the estates of two great game preservers, and unless report belies him he actually obtains more than the rent of his farm by subletting the right of shooting over it to a syndicate of pot-hunting tradesmen from the neighbouring town. Needless to add that hunting is anathema to him. That such men are ever accepted as tenants of farms is, of course, regrettable as much from a national as a sporting point of view; but there are two sides to every question, and there is a great deal to be said on Tiplady's. He cares nothing for sport as we understand it; hunting to him merely means a number of strangers riding over his crops, and breaking down his already dilapidated fences, while a fox is only associated with disputed poultry bills. He derives neither amusement nor profit from fox-hunting: no one buys forage from him, and, indeed, the oats and hay produced on his holding are not such

as one would care to set before one's hunters. Numerically small as this class of farmer fortunately is, it is none the less strong enough to do a deal of harm to hunting, and consequently, I think it deserves rather more consideration than is usually shown to it. Men like Tiplady are soon made to know that they are regarded as Pariahs and Ishmaelites beneath a respectable person's notice, a state of things which only serves to embitter them still further against sport; whereas a little diplomacy in dealing with them would probably have removed all friction. This, fortunately, proved to be the case to-day. I confess I approached Mr. Tiplady—who bears the worst of reputations for amiability—with considerable misgivings, but after a good deal of bluster, he finally consented not to put up the obnoxious wire, on condition the Hunt supplied him with sufficient posts and rails to repair his fences. Nay more, on the conclusion of my visit he even accompanied me to the limits of his farm, and while doing so made a remark which I think sufficiently shows the class of agriculturist to which —— College has entrusted its property. Pointing to a very rushy swampy field, I remarked it would be the better for draining.

'Dra-a-i-nin,' scornfully repeated my new friend, contemptuously, 'Ar thenk nowt o' dr-a-a-i-nin, it nabbut taks t' heart oot o' t' land!'

On my way home I received a striking proof of the certainty with which men who spend all their days in the open air can prophesy a change in the weather. It had been freezing hard for two days; the earth was like iron and the sky like steel; a razor-edged wind was blowing from the north-east, and the sun was setting like a ball of fire; the glass was steady at 'set fair'; in fine, everything pointed to a protracted frost, and falling in with old Billy Purves, plodding his weary way home from his day's work of hedging and ditching, I hazarded an opinion to this effect. But Billy shook his wise old head, and laconically said, 'We shall hev' fresh—a thaw—to-morrer.' —'What makes you think that?' I asked.—'T' mowdywarps[1] is starting to work,' he replied; and sure enough, although it froze harder than ever that night, the next afternoon the wind suddenly veered round to the south-west, a warm rain began to fall, and a steady thaw set in.

Feb. 23.—I have been a good deal exercised in my mind by a statement that has appeared in the papers that the corps of stalkers and gillies raised by Lord Lovat for service in South

[1] Moles.

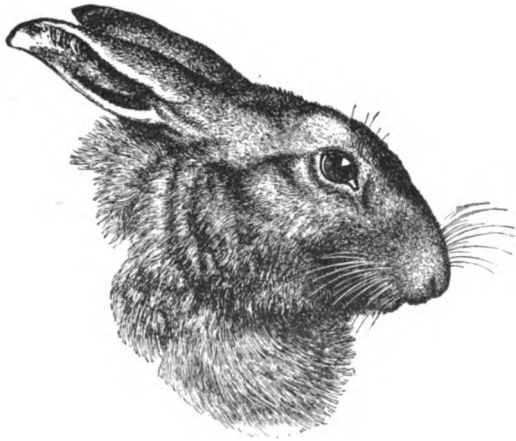
Africa is to be mounted on the men's own ponies. Now my experience of the ordinary Highland deerstalking pony is, that it is a small, docile beast, exceedingly intelligent, surefooted as a cat, and capable of carrying a heavy load over very difficult ground, but I should have thought entirely lacking in the speed necessary to a mounted infantry man when manœuvring in open ground. No doubt it could pick its way up a kopje like a monkey, but on the undulating veldt a good mule would lose it. I should imagine that the most useful mounts for such a body of men would be the ponies which for generations have been bred in the western dales of Yorkshire and Durham. Equally hardy as their Highland congeners, and equally accustomed to travel over difficult ground, they combine a good deal of size and breeding, and are fast enough for anything on the flat. I knew of one which, after carrying a huntsman of a pack of fox-hounds during the cubbing season, became an admirable boy's hunter. In their native wilds they are entirely grass and hay fed, and I have heard of them actually refusing oats as an unknown and consequently suspicious article of food.

Still, whatever they are mounted on, Lord Lovat's men should prove a magnificent body of scouts, though somehow one hardly associates a Highlander with riding.

Feb. 27.—To-day a camp of gipsies has established itself on the waste land at the foot of the lane. A few years ago gipsies used to be common enough, but of late one rarely sees them, and I fancy they must be dying out, or perhaps losing their old vagrant propensities from intermarriage with the 'Gorgios.' Still I believe they cling to their old customs, for I recently read in the papers of the crowning or election of a gipsy king—at Yetholm, in Roxburghshire, if I remember rightly. By the way, I can call to mind a striking instance of the power wielded by these rulers, and one which, moreover, shows what a keen sense of gratitude the much maligned gipsy can exhibit on occasion. When I was a little boy at school in the extreme south of England, the Queen of that part of Wessex was a certain Eleanor Stanley, and a fine handsome black-haired dame she was. The chief landowner in the neighbourhood, whom I will call Squire Oakball, used to show great kindness to her and her tribe, allowing them to camp on his land, to gather firewood, and enjoy other trifling privileges, which I have his own word for it, they never abused in the slightest.

One day a lady staying at Mr. Oakball's lost a valuable bracelet off her wrist when out sketching, but although she

quickly discovered her loss, and caused every possible effort to be made to find it, no trace of the bracelet could be found; and it was suspected that a gipsy-like lad, who had been seen prowling about while she was sketching, must have picked it up. Meeting Eleanor Stanley a few days later Mr. Oakball delicately hinted at this suspicion, only to receive a truly royal answer. 'A true Romany never steals,' she replied, drawing herself proudly up, 'but if one of my people has found your bracelet, and it be still within the four seas of Britain, you shall have it back.' Three weeks later the bracelet, which had been lost within a mile of the English Channel, was sent to Mr. Oakball, postmarked Carlisle!



LORD'S UP TO DATE

BY R. D. WALKER

IF the late Mr. William Henry Dark could revisit the glimpses of the moon, and find himself inside the gates of Lord's Cricket Ground, it is very doubtful if he would realise his position, and would not rather imagine himself the victim of some strange hallucination. Up to the autumn of 1898 there would have been the old block of buildings comprising the billiard-room, tennis and racquet courts, to allay his doubts as to whether he really was not dreaming, but otherwise he might well fancy himself surveying an unknown land. Now that this block has been removed and a colossal stand erected in its place, the last old landmark has disappeared; even the clock has been doomed to a partial eclipse, for though it is now erected in another place, the combined intelligence of the executive failed to assign it a position where it could be of any practical use to the majority of members.

Before entering on a review of the latest alterations and additions there is one point which must strike every member as a most important one, and that is whether the outlay of such a large sum, amounting to over fifty thousand pounds, ought to have been incurred by the management without calling a special general meeting and laying before it a report embodying the proposed scheme. For an immense club, such as the M.C.C. has now grown to be, with its large income and its multifarious branches, a corresponding expenditure is more or less a necessity, and the sub-committees appointed to deal with the minor details of the various departments make their reports and recommendations to the General Committee for their ultimate approval; but when it comes to the question of

building operations on an extensive scale, amounting to more than two years' income, it appears only reasonable that the whole Club should have the opportunity of expressing its views and of giving or withholding its consent to the proposed outlay, and for the future it is advisable that some limit should be fixed beyond which the Committee should not go without such consent being obtained.

The erection of a new stand was really a necessity in view of the Australian matches. When the Colonials were here before the public could not be properly accommodated: money was paid at the gates for admission by numbers who, having got in, were unable to obtain any view of the game, and the area for play was considerably encroached on; but owing to the building of this new stand, and timely notice being given that the gates would be closed when the ground was full, there was room for all, and everything went off in an orderly manner. Except on the Whitsuntide bank holiday and Gentlemen *v.* Players the stand will be more or less of a white elephant, and frequently present an array of empty benches; but having been built for the public it seems best to keep it for them, and not to charge extra for seats there. The only exception might be made on the occasion of the 'picnic' matches, in which the public are not so particularly interested, when the charge for admission is higher, and additional room is required for those who are *really* interested, viz., past and present University and Public School men who are not members of the Club, many of whom have relatives playing in the matches.

For these two contests one half might be reserved and the other half be free to the public as usual. The new stand is naturally the most costly item in the immense sum expended on building operations, though the cost of the tennis and racquet courts behind the pavilion was unduly high, and on this score the executive body have certainly laid themselves open to adverse criticism in many ways. When the question of site was first discussed there was a small minority, consisting of past and present tennis players, who argued that the ground near St. John's Wood Station would be far preferable.

1. Because there was not only more space at command, so that the buildings would not be cramped (as they undoubtedly are in the present site), but from the absence of all houses in the immediate neighbourhood a far better light would be obtained, which, as every one knows, is a most important factor in tennis and racquet courts.

2. Because, in the winter months especially, it would be much more convenient for the few who came up to play than having to go an extra half-mile.

3. Because the close proximity of other houses would very probably cause trouble on the ground of interference with light.

Being outvoted, however, great stress was laid by the minority on the question of objections likely to be raised by tenants of houses who would find their light interfered with, and it was urged that before any building operations were begun great care should be exercised, and the occupants interviewed, to find out if any complaints were likely to arise. It will scarcely be believed that in spite of this warning the buildings were begun without any such steps having been taken, though it was an open secret that one occupier was only too ready to waive any objection in consideration of a nominal sum; but he, finding his interests entirely ignored, as soon as the walls of the tennis court were built, obtained an injunction against the Club, which they thought it more prudent not to fight, and had to be paid five hundred pounds, *plus* costs amounting probably to half as much again, when the whole matter might have been arranged for next to nothing.

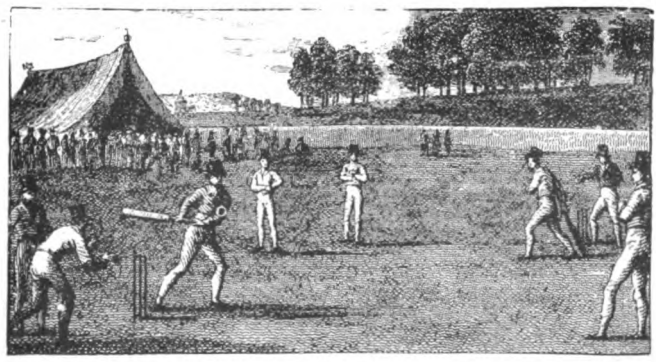
The fact is that in this matter as well as in the Club generally things are not conducted in a businesslike manner, and one cannot help feeling that there has been for a long time something radically wrong in the constitution of the executive body. The M.C.C. at the present time is a big and growing concern; like all other bodies, it requires for its management men who are not only willing but able to devote a good deal of time and interest to the conduct of its affairs; and it is not to be expected that members who are most of them occupied in various professions and callings far away from headquarters, and who are only able to pay flying visits in the summer afternoons and still rarer ones in the winter months, can possibly give as much time and care to the business and interests of the Club as its magnitude imperatively requires.

As far as the new courts are concerned it must in justice be said that the internal arrangements appear to be excellent, both for the players and attendants, and one can only hope that the noise of the balls during play will not interfere materially with the comfort of the occupants of the pavilion. The new building adjoining the members' dining-room is a decided improvement, and provides accommodation in the shape of balcony and boxes for a good many, besides affording a home for the clock;

and the erection in the north-west corner for the use of the ground staff is also a most useful addition, though one can hardly characterise it as ornamental.

The admission of two hundred life-members at £200 a head is a measure that many will disapprove. Apart from the question as to whether this is an expedient way of raising money to pay for a large outlay in building operations, it can hardly be said to represent a fair amount proportionately as regards their life interest: £100 represents a subscription for thirty-three years, and for any one between the ages of twenty and thirty-five this is a very reasonable composition; but it would have been a much more satisfactory and equitable arrangement to admit four hundred at £100 instead of fixing a prohibitive price to many who had been candidates for a long time and would gladly have paid the lesser sum. The number of members at the present time is about four thousand five hundred, so that with the addition of these two hundred and the coming elections in the present year, there will soon be five thousand. As it is there is not room in the pavilion on crowded match days, and it seems the time has arrived for seriously considering whether a limit should not be fixed, or, at any rate, whether any other than *bonâ fide* cricket candidates should be elected.

The game has now unfortunately become more or less of a gate-money business, and is conducted in a spirit very different from what it was a few years back. How many sixpences and shillings are paid at the turnstiles seems to be the chief anxiety of the executive, and even at the School match this year a leading member was heard lamenting the threatening rain, not because the play would be interfered with, but on account of the consequent loss of half-crowns at the gate.



FREAKS AMONG THE PHEASANTS

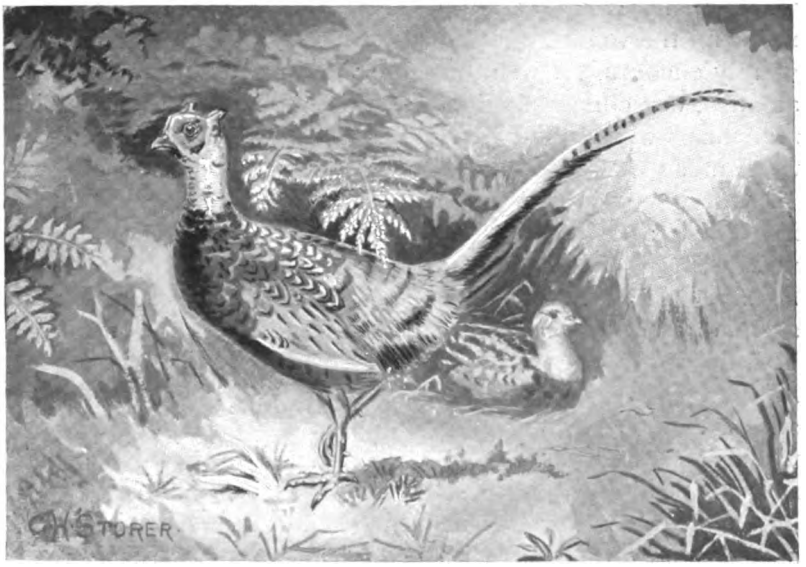
BY G. H. STORER, F.Z.S.

MANY of our game-birds, as all experienced sportsmen will admit, are liable to considerable variation in plumage. The mottled feathers of the grouse may vary in ground colour from pale fulvous to brown, so intense as to be almost black; the bird has even been shot with the rich orange-brown breast and white stomacher of the cock ryper when he struts in his summer glory before his admiring mate. The 'little brown bird' of September 'sports' into buff, cream, white, black, and mottled varieties, or it may even delight the sportsman in some few favoured localities by showing itself in the beautiful chestnut garb of the so-called 'mountain' partridge, a form so distinct as to have been regarded by its first describer as a separate species. The tiny migratory quail, to a certain extent, varies individually both in ground tint and markings, especially as regards the black anchor on the throat of the male.

But of all our game-birds the lordly pheasant excels in varieties and most delights in freaks. Several reasons conduce to this. First of all the pheasant, as we now know him in our coverts, is no longer a species; he is, to use the word first applied to him by Mr. Tegetmeier, a 'mongrel,' a beautiful mongrel it is true, but still only a mongrel, the descendant of ancestors of widely different origin. The rich, dark-hued bird, descendant of those introduced into our island long ago from the banks of the Phasis, possibly by some bold Roman officer who, like many an officer since, appreciated good cheer, is seldom if ever met with pure-bred in the woods, and an 'old English' bird as known to our grandfathers without some trace of a cross

with the ring-necked Chinese bird, rarely gladdens the eye of the sportsman nowadays. Then, again, the crosses thus obtained have been still further hybridised by the introduction into many preserves, notably in Norfolk, of the heavy dark green Japanese, which have chiefly contributed size and weight to the resulting mongrel, the light bright tints and white collar of the ever-present Chinese bird eventually predominating over the deeper shades of the less abundant species.

It is to be expected that with such a very mixed origin the



PIED BIRDS

pheasant should vary greatly individually both in plumage and weight, but even before the introduction of the ring-neck our 'old English' bird appears to have been subject to certain well-marked varieties. These were chiefly white or pied birds, and the beautiful form known as the 'Bohemian' pheasant.

Every sportsman must, some time or other, have come across pheasants whose plumage was more or less mottled with white—'silvered' as it is sometimes called—and very beautiful such birds look when seen with their fellows in the covert. I well remember when a boy the delight I felt in watching a cock bird of this kind on a certain estate I sometimes visited. This bird was very evenly marked, the head and neck being almost wholly white, whilst the back and tail feathers were pied; the

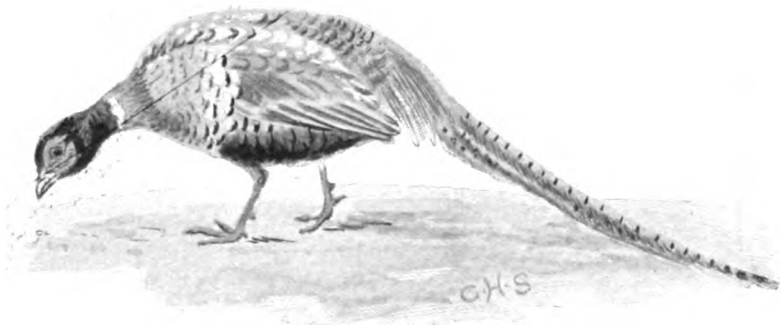
flight feathers of the wings were also white. As will be imagined he was an extremely ornamental bird, and as it was desired to have other pied birds in the coverts he was penned up with ordinary hen birds. Of the resulting chicks very few showed any trace of the conspicuous white feathers of the male parent, the vast majority being in no way remarkable. White birds are, of course, even more conspicuous than pied ones, and whilst giving a pleasing variety to the covert, are not, I think, an unmixed blessing. Lack of colour is often, in my experience, accompanied by loss of size, white birds being generally somewhat smaller than dark ones, and as no one is desirous of reducing the weight of his birds, white birds should not be too greatly encouraged. In the same way one frequently finds that amongst our common field birds it is the weak and undersized individuals which yield the white or blanched variations from the plumage of the type.

One very good instance came under my notice whilst studying birds in the north of Ireland some years ago, and I may perhaps be permitted to mention it here. We had been on the bogs after snipe, and late in the afternoon were crossing the slope of a hill when we disturbed a pack of skylarks, which had, no doubt, couched on the ground for the coming night. As the birds rose the setting sun illumined the startled flock, and brought out prominently one bird in the tail of the pack which gleamed white against the dark brown plumage of its fellows. This bird when shot proved to be not indeed white, but pale cream, the usual markings being reproduced in a darker shade ; the feet, bill, and iris of the eye were also much lighter than ordinary, but the most remarkable thing about it was its diminutive size, for it was more than a third less than the birds with which it flew.

Another and serious disadvantage which white birds possess over the ordinary breed arises from that very lack of colour which renders them attractive to our eyes. The common hen pheasant in her mottled brown garb is provided by nature with a protecting shield, the value of which cannot be overestimated ; and careless as she is in choosing the site for her nest, the sombre tints of her plumage harmonise so well with the brown earth and dead leaves on which she squats motionless, that the presence of the sitting bird must frequently escape detection. With a white or pied hen the case is totally different, for if conspicuous to us, how much more so must she be to the furred and feathered felons of the woods ? And in a less degree a

cock bird similarly distinguished cannot but be seriously handicapped in the battle of life. We may take it for granted, I think, that wherever such birds exist in any number in a covert there the vermin will have been well-nigh exterminated.

A more uncommon, but, in my opinion, far more interesting variety is the so-called 'Bohemian' pheasant. Why this beautiful form should be thus named is hard to say, for it is certainly better known in England and far more abundant than in the country whose name it bears, but being rare and strange I suppose it must therefore be 'Bohemian.' In this variety, whilst the head and neck of the male retain the changing blues and greens so conspicuous in the ordinary cock pheasant, the



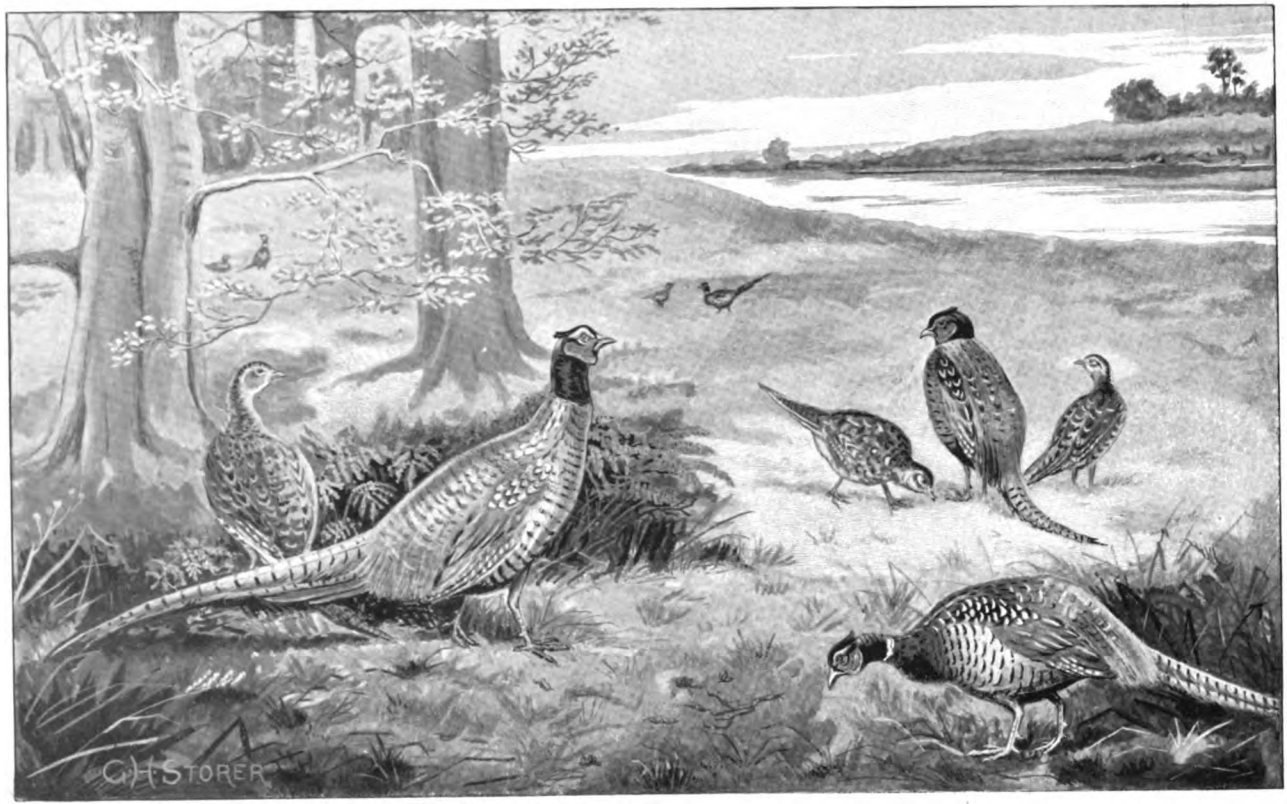
RING-NECKED BOHEMIAN

rest of the plumage is reproduced in delicate shades of cream or buff, which show off to great advantage the black tips and bars of the body feathers. This paleness of tint is not accompanied by any physical weakness, as in albinos and blanched birds, for the Bohemians are often very robust, and have a great tendency to hand down their own peculiarities to their descendants, so that with care the race can easily be perpetuated. White and pied birds are much more uncertain in this particular, for if mated with common birds, as in the case previously mentioned, the offspring are extremely likely to revert to the ordinary stock.

Bohemians seem to occur most frequently in the East and North of England, and in the Lowlands of Scotland, but I have on two or three occasions seen them offered for sale with common pheasants in the Midlands, and last January obtained a nice example in the Birmingham market, which was said to

have been shot near Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire. This bird, which is still in my possession, though not very large, is a good example of the breed, and has served as a model for the centre figure in the accompanying drawing. Before preserving it I measured it carefully in the flesh, and found its extreme length from tip of bill to end of tail to be thirty-four and three-quarter inches, the longest tail feather being twenty inches. It weighed two pounds thirteen ounces several days after being shot. In this bird the general cream colour is palest on the back and flanks, but is inclined to be rusty where it joins the green neck and upon the breast. There is no indication of a white ring on the neck, but evidence of Chinese origin is seen in the pale green-grey feathers of the lower back and tail-coverts, and the somewhat small size of the bird. The shoulder-feathers (scapulars) are extremely beautiful ; each has a pale yellow centre edged with black, and margined with a broad belt of warm buff. The iris of the eye was lighter than in the common pheasant, the feet pale slate-grey, spurs blunt. Other Bohemians which I have examined show every gradation, from one or two white feathers amongst the green, to the broadest white ring of the typical Chinese bird, and some very fine examples are preserved in the museums of our northern cities, but the most interesting specimen and, indeed, one of the most beautiful pheasants I have ever seen, is amongst the treasures of the 'John Hancock' Museum at Newcastle-on-Tyne. This fine bird, which must be regarded, I think, as a unique variety of the Bohemian race, has been mounted by the talented naturalist as if parading, with body erect and tail spread, and in this position shows off to great advantage the loveliness of its plumage. It is labelled, 'White-browed Variety of the Pheasant,' and, as we learn from the note attached, was bred at Longhirst Hall, near Morpeth, where it was shot in January 1889, and whence it was presented to the museum by Mr. James Joicey, M.P. In this bird the usual pale crown is bordered with a stripe of white, giving it a pair of 'white eye-brows,' and these, together with the very wide collar, contrast boldly with the dark green neck and bronze chest-patch. The back, wing-coverts and flanks are yellowish buff, the wing-coverts being edged with deeper buff ; the upper part of the wing is whitish grey, whilst the tail-coverts are greenish.

An interesting occurrence, and one which always calls for comment amongst sportsmen, is the assumption of male attire by birds of the opposite sex. Elderly hen pheasants, and such



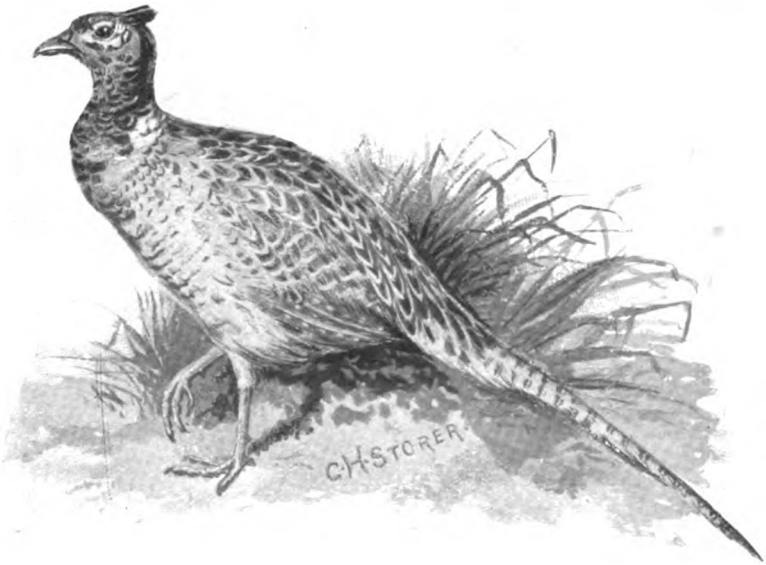
A BOHEMIAN AMONG THE PHEASANTS

as have ceased to lay, are especially liable to become freaks of this kind, and individuals may be met with showing every degree of change, from the hen with a few metallic feathers in

WHITE-BROWED VARIETY

the neck, to one so completely clad in male attire as to be hardly distinguishable, save by her smaller size, from her former lord and master. In looking over examples of these so-called 'mule' pheasants I have been interested to note that the

assumption of male plumage is not always accompanied by an equal development of masculine ornaments and weapons. For instance, one 'mule' pheasant, evidently a pure-bred 'old English' bird, though as brightly coloured as most cock birds, shows hardly any change in the flesh of the face and no vestige of spurs, otherwise than by the tiny scale present in all hen birds. This bird had the whole of the head and neck dark changing blue—no white ring—the fore-back and breast bright copper, with small black triangular tips similar to, but very much smaller than those in the male; the belly blackish; the



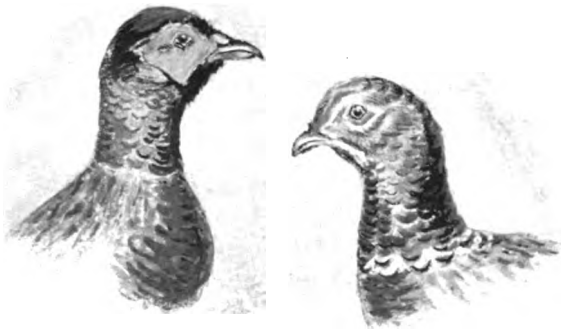
A 'MULE' PHEASANT. HEN BIRD ASSUMING THE PLUMAGE OF THE COCK

shoulder-feathers—always a conspicuous feature in the cock pheasant—pale buff, edged with a narrow black line succeeded by a broad chestnut band; feathers of the lower back and tail-coverts long and reddish chestnut, not grey or slate blue, a sure sign of pure 'old English' blood, whilst the tail, though long, was more lightly coloured than in the male. On the other hand, whilst the plumage may be only partly masculine in character, as in the accompanying drawing of a 'mule' bird in the Leicester Museum, the ear tufts may be well developed, signs of the scarlet cheek-patch appear, and incipient spurs become distinctly visible.

In another example, of which I have sketched the head, the face was so bedecked with scarlet skin that it looked at first as

if the head and neck of a small but brilliant cock bird had been grafted, as it were, on the shoulders of an ordinary hen. In this case the feathers of the body and wings were but little changed, and there were no traces of spurs.

When we consider the origin of our common pheasant it is not surprising to find that it readily crosses with other pheasants which have a better title to be called species than our friend of the covert possesses, and that when its range adjoins the haunts of other game-birds the pheasant not infrequently contracts an alliance with its neighbour, and thus gives origin to hybrid offspring. This is most frequently the case with the common



HEADS OF 'MULE' PHEASANTS

fowl. Whenever fowl are kept on the borders of preserves, the challenge of the barn-door cock is likely to be answered by the defiant crow of some pugnacious pheasant, and in the battle which ensues the latter is often victorious. The gay plumage and gallant bearing of the conqueror commend him to the eyes of the feathered 'fair,' and hybrid birds bearing generally traces of both parents result. Thus, on a certain farm I know of in Derbyshire, pheasants may frequently be seen feeding and consorting with the fowls in the farmyard, and have been known to pair with them—on one occasion, indeed, a chick was hatched out which, as it grew up, showed in form and colour unmistakable evidence of its pheasant-fowl parentage. Doubtless other examples might have been obtained if more eggs had been kept for setting.

Most of the hybrids met with are, however, probably pen-bred,

even if shot in the woods. Penned pheasants will sometimes cross with fowls with which they happen to be confined, even when the latter bear not the least resemblance to the females of their own species. Thus, I knew of a golden pheasant pairing with a white Japanese bantam, which was an inmate, with several other birds, of the same aviary. Unfortunately the resulting eggs were never hatched, and so the opportunity of studying the offspring of this curious union was lost.

Two interesting pheasant-fowl hybrids may be seen in the Edinburgh Museum. One, presented by Sir Douglas Maclagan, is uniformly black with purple and blue reflections. It is a

PHEASANT-FOWL HYBRID

large heavy-looking bird, with feathered legs and feet, and a tail intermediate in length between that of the pheasant and fowl. The other specimen, although the general colour is blue-black, is much more variegated, the feathers on the breast and back being edged with brown or buff, whilst the wings are beautifully mottled with chestnut and buff.

Another hybrid having more of the pheasant colour about it is in the collection of Sir Oswald Mosley, at Rolleston Hall, and is supposed to be a cross between a bantam cock and a pheasant hen.

From crosses between our common pheasant and other members of the genus Phasianus many beautiful hybrids have resulted, and union with the less closely related but very gorgeous golden pheasant, also produces offspring of great

beauty. One of these hybrids may be seen amongst the game-birds in the Newcastle Museum, which was purchased at a poulterer's shop in the town. In this example the golden pheasant blood would seem to be predominant, for in addition to a yellow crest upon the head, the barred feathers of the neck are prolonged into a kind of frill which possibly would be erectile in life. The fiery crimson of the breast and flanks of the pure-bred golden pheasant is in this hybrid toned to orange, whilst the long median tail-feathers are edged with warm yellowish buff, and marked with thin, zigzag, transverse bars on each side of the quill.

BLACKCOCK PHEASANT HYBRID

The pheasant has even been known to mate with the guinea-fowl, and in Scotland with the capercailzie, whilst quite thirty instances of hybrid pheasants and black game have been recorded since dear old Gilbert White wrote his account of the strange bird from Holt in Sussex.

The latter hybrids generally show in the darkness of their plumage their black game parentage, but are often very inferior to that bird in form and nobility of carriage. The head, neck, and lower parts are usually blackish with metallic reflections—blue, green, claret or bronze. The mottled back, shoulders and wing-covers are brownish with dark points and light wavy lines, but the tail is often the part which shows most resemblance to the pheasant, being generally wedge-shaped, and sometimes barred in the usual pheasant style, but as it is not very long it

reminds one chiefly of the hen bird. Two specimens are preserved in the 'John Hancock' Museum, at Newcastle, so often referred to in this article, and an institution which cannot but delight every bird-loving sportsman who visits it. One of these birds sketched during a recent visit is figured on the previous page.

Another and very beautiful example—perhaps the most beautiful blackcock hybrid which I have been able to examine personally—is the Shropshire specimen shot by Major Knight, and now in the Leicester Museum. This bird, the colours of which are more than usually vivid, is mounted as if rising from a tangled growth of brambles and grasses, and is a fine instance of what may be done with a dead game-bird in the hands of a talented naturalist like Mr. Montague Brown.

In conclusion I may be permitted to state that these notes on one feature in the natural history of the pheasant—its liability to produce what for want of a better term we may call 'Sports'—by no means pretend to be exhaustive, but are merely the observations of one who has personally found the subject very attractive, and who in submitting his pen and pencil sketches to the readers of the *Badminton Magazine* does so in the hope that he may interest others in the strange and beautiful creatures he has called 'Freaks among the Pheasants.'

PIKE, PERCH, ROACH, AND RUDD

THE BANK ANGLER'S GAME

BY JOHN WATSON

ANENT the water-wolf, Izaak Walton says that 'the mighty luce, or pike, is taken to be the tyrant, as the salmon is the king, of the fresh waters. It is not to be doubted but that they are bred, some by generation and some not, as namely, of a weed called pickerel-weed, unless learned Gesner be much mistaken; for he says this weed and other glutinous matter, with the help of the sun's heat in some particular months and some ponds apted for it by nature, do become pikes. But doubtless divers pikes are bred after this manner, or are brought into some ponds some such other ways as is past man's finding out, of which we have daily testimonies.'

It is not often that we find the Father of Fishers either recording that which he himself has not seen or facts; but here, for once, he is found tripping—as, indeed, he otherwheres admits when he throws the proof of the curious 'fact' upon the learned Gesner. And still there is a half-truth in the statement, as it is now known that the pike sheds its spawn upon pickerel-weed, to which it adheres. The number of eggs which the pike produces is enormous, and in three individuals Buckland found respectively 43,000, 224,640, and 292,300 in fish weighing 35 lbs., 24 lbs., and 28 lbs. respectively. The first of these measured 3 ft. 10½ in. in length, 2 ft. in girth, and was the largest pike Buckland ever saw. After being spawned,

probably only a small proportion of the eggs will ever be hatched, for they are fed upon by a host of aquatic creatures. Although the weed upon which pike spawn affords some shelter, it does not offer sufficient to guard it from many devouring enemies. Among these are pike themselves, and numerous fishes that share the same haunt. Wildfowl feed upon it, and the swan seeks it out as a paradise for her brown cygnets. Then there are the small fry of various fishes that are constantly on the look-out for spawn, in addition to birds, beetles, and numerous water insects, which destroy enormous quantities. Even when successfully hatched the small pike have a hard time of it during their early career, and unless they can manage to steer clear of their parents and elder acquaintances, they will not long survive. If the water in which pike happen to be is limited, only a few of the largest fish survive ; and in re-stocking

PIKE

care should be taken that the newly-introduced fish should be somewhat equal in age and size. It has frequently come about that one patriarchal pike has been the only denizen of a pond, having long ago devoured all its smaller compeers. In fact, this devouring capacity of the fish, and its great voracity, are among its chief characteristics. The writer once saw a large jack swimming about with a smaller one held crosswise in its jaws, and has frequently noticed personal combats, with attempts at gorging, by fish of nearly equal size. Once in particular was this ferocious quality exhibited, under what might have been thought unlikely conditions. We had been trolling in a mountain tarn and had taken several fish, which were thrown into the water-covered bottom of an old slimy punt. Even in this element one pike attempted to swallow another of about its own size, succeeding so far as to get the smaller fish well into its throat. And it may here be stated that what once gets impacted into a pike's maw is not likely to return—not alone by reason of the ferocity already referred to, but more on account of the eel trap like arrangement of its fine, formidable

teeth. Upon one occasion two pike were taken in Loch Tay, the one firmly impacted in the mouth of the other. The head of the one was tightly inserted up to the termination of its gill, and part of the first lower fin was in the mouth of the larger one. The fish together weighed nineteen pounds. A couple of pike were taken by a lad from the Tweed at Kelso, one half-swallowed by the other. Both fish were alive. They were placed in water, when the larger made two or three attempts to swallow its neighbour. These fish were forwarded to Buckland, and Dr. Burton, who sent them, remarked that the lad who captured them wondered much to see 'a muckle fish wi' twa tails.' It is fortunate that most fish seem to know the character of their predacious neighbour; and no small fry are allowed or care to go near his haunts; those that were there originally have long ago entered its voracious jaws. And such jaws! Well may the little fish in sheer fright jump right out of the water or make for the shallows, where the water-wolf cannot follow them. To the roach, the tiny sticklebacks, and the silvery minnows, the pike is a terrible giant and bugbear. Like most predatory fishes, his appetite is enormous and his digestion quick. He will attack and attempt to swallow one of his own species almost his equal in weight and size, which feat we have more than once witnessed. He is also a great enemy to trout, and we know one of the best trout streams in the country which he has almost depopulated. He is a difficult enemy to circumvent, his extinction being almost impracticable; but with many baits and lures he affords good sport to hundreds of anglers where there are scarcely any other fish, and so we must not be too hard upon him.

Throughout Britain the pike is both common and widely distributed. It occurs not only in canals and reservoirs (in some of which it is extremely abundant), but also in many rivers. Pike love deep, logged water, and when they are found in running streams it is mainly in pools and dams. Sometimes they lie in deep dubs, but always make to the shallows to spawn. The eggs are shed in spring, at which time, of course, the fish is in poor condition, and is generally to be found among weeds, or where the water has backed up into an eddy. As to the food of the pike, something has been said already; it will devour almost all species of fresh-water fishes, which it endeavours to gulp down whole. It sometimes catches a tartar in a prickly perch, which, finding itself in the pike's jaws, immediately raises its back fin, when all the efforts which the pike can

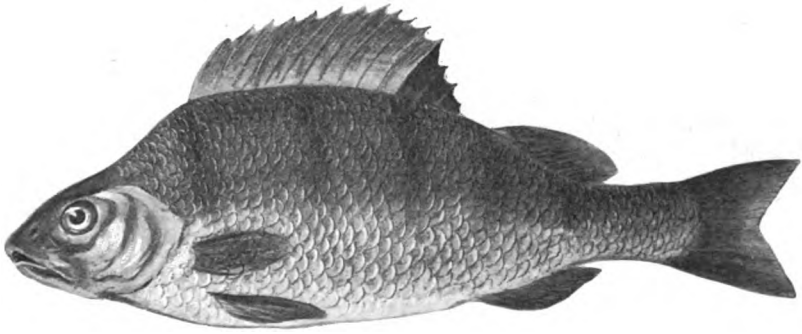
exert are unable to disgorge it. In addition to a pretty wide range of fish food, the pike disdains neither flesh nor fowl, and sometimes even indulges in carrion. A pike has been known to attempt to swallow a salmon, and it is well authenticated that various species of the young of waterfowl have been taken, and they commonly capture water-voles and rats.

One of the legends attaching to the pike is that it lives to a very great age, but this is only a legend. Certain large fish are known to have lived from eight to twelve years, and the facts in this connection are well authenticated. There is a story of a pike having existed for 267 years. This was the famous Mannheim pike captured in 1497, and which attained to the enormous length of nineteen feet. It had in its gills a brass ring, upon which was engraved in Greek, 'I am the first fish which was placed in this pond by the hand of Frederick II., Governor of the World, on the 5th of October 1230'—surely the most marvellous pike on record! Its skeleton is still preserved, and is nearly nineteen feet in length, *only it happens to be a compound of two individuals*, and an examination has shown that several vertebræ have been added. The ring of gilded brass could 'enlarge itself by springs' —a highly necessary qualification, all things considered.

There is one thing in the life-history of the pike which has never been clearly proved. This is as to its power of making overland journeys—of changing its haunt, either for food or water. It is said that lately an English gentleman residing at Antwerp tested this 'fact' by constructing two new ponds, one of which was stocked with pike and the other with small fresh-water fish. After two days the ponds were emptied, when it was found that some of the pike had made the journey between the two and had created sad havoc among their neighbours. This experiment, however, could hardly be taken as offering conclusive evidence of the truth of the 'fact' it was intended to demonstrate. The habit of pike sunning themselves on the top of the water and their going in pairs is well known.

The armoured perch is certainly one of the handsomest of British fresh-water fishes. He is a bold biter, too, and affords sport to a whole army of anglers who have never flogged a trout-stream or fished a salmon river. His distribution is almost as wide as that of the Englishman, and he is as hardy as prolific. A large female fish will yield 200,000 eggs in a season, and as these hatch rapidly the possible increase of the species may be imagined. Perch fry, however, have an army of aquatic enemies which allow but a small number ever to reach maturity.

There is a quiet confidence about the perch which renders observation of its habits both easy and interesting. If fed by hand they soon recognise their friend, and are punctual in their appearing. Looking down into the still, deep water, the first sign of the approach of perch is the sudden stampede of a shoal of silvery roach. The metallic scales of these flash in the sunlight, though the perch conform more nearly to their environment. The reflection of the leaves and the waving of the weeds cause the water to be dark olive-green, and before the 'bass' rise to the warmer water it is difficult to detect them in the deeps. As they approach the surface their easy evolutions and bright colouring are at once seen. The burnished armour is deep bronze, done with bars of darker green, the whole shaded

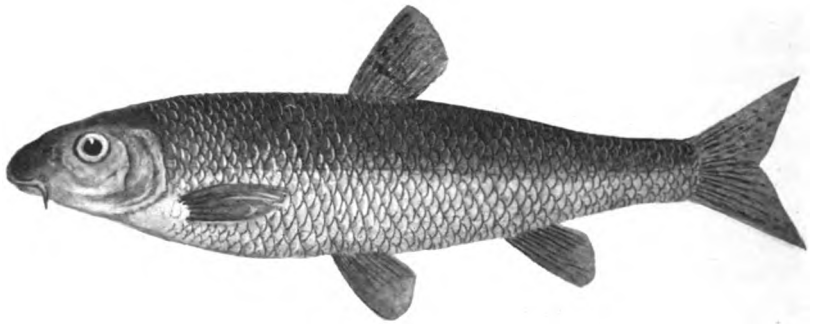


PERCH

by a sheen of peacock iridescence. The fins show as sparks of fire in the dark water, and alternately the dorsal spine is erected and depressed. Perfect amity seems to exist betwixt the perch and his neighbours—so long as he is allowed 'to rule the roast.' If a roach or gudgeon so much as attempt to invade his feeding-ground he loses not a moment in preparing his weapons. It has been well said that the armament of spines on a perch's back acts as the index of his mind; and the conceit recommends itself to any one who has observed the fish in its haunts. Just as the smaller birds drop into their leafy retreats at the shadow of a hawk, so the small fry of the waters rush to their rests at the green glint of the 'water-wolf.' Not so, however, the perch. He parades himself before the pike, at the same time erecting his spiny armour. Not only pike, but other predatory fish and grebes, have been found choked by the armoured perch.

The salmon or trout-fisher is rarely averse to devote a day

to perch. In fact this is the game at which he was 'entered,' and he has never quite forgotten that first golden afternoon. He remembers every bait which will tempt the prettily-finned fish to drag down the float, and has used them all. How many hours has he stood by the bank of some sluggish stream or quiet tarn, every moment of which was filled with pleasurable hope? And then the intense excitement of hauling one of the crimson-tinted fishes on the bank, and how this was repeated again and again until the perch stopped 'biting.' But to hundreds of others besides the youthful enthusiast this beautiful fish has given quiet, pleasurable enjoyment; and then, is he not one of the very best-known of all our 'sporting-fish'? Through the long hours of a sunny summer day the perch will some-



GUDGEON

times continue to feed, and then the catch may be counted by the score. But oftener the conditions are not nearly so favourable, and the fish may severely try the long-suffering patience of the angler. Anglers endeavour to lure the perch with a great variety of mysterious compounds, but usually the most successful is a small red-worm. This should be allowed to rise and fall, for the apparent animation of the prey invariably excites the fish to come at the bait with a rush. Immature perch bite recklessly, larger ones much more circumspectly. There are certain climatic conditions, however, when almost every fish of a shoal may be bagged. The dark, golden shadows pass and repass beneath; though immediately a bait touches the water every fish rushes towards it. The wide-open mouth, the flashing fins, the erect dorsal spines—all show irritation when the worm is withdrawn. If the tactics are changed, and a perch is hooked, he fights not ungamely, though he sometimes succeeds in shaking himself free. If, however, he

is landed, his fate in no way intimidates his neighbours; they come, one by one, until the last of the shoal is lying among the docks and nettles. More frequently the big fish are slow to be thus lifted out, though the smaller ones seem to have no such clear objection.

In Windermere and Derwentwater perch are exceedingly abundant, and sometimes hundreds are taken from a boat in a single evening's fishing. But where they exist in such quantities they are usually of small size. Thousands of perch are also to be found in Slapton Ley, Devonshire; though the largest and best are in the Avon, Kennet, and the Norfolk Broads. The economy of the perch is somewhat difficult to comprehend. Being so exceeding prolific, they sometimes exist in thousands. When this is the case the 'schools' invariably consist of the smallest fish. Only large ones are to be had where the species is numerically weak, and hence the best fishing is found in preserved waters. The only way to improve an existing stock is to reduce it by two-thirds, then to feed the remainder. Unlike some of the coarse fish, the perch rarely attains to any size, and whilst it is not uncommon to read of individuals of six, seven, or eight pounds, yet a two-pound perch is a large and handsome fish. Buckland took casts of perch of 3 lbs. 2 ozs. and 2 lbs. 11 ozs., the former containing 127,240 eggs, the latter 155,620. Whilst perfectly wild fish rarely attain to this size, it is not difficult to produce larger ones under semi-artificial conditions.

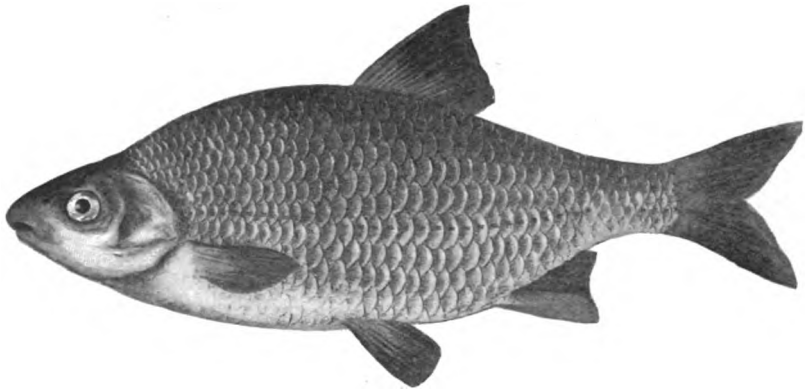
A stretch of water known to the writer runs along the edge of an old English garden. The fish are encouraged to congregate along its sides, and they show quite an amount of confidence in coming to be fed. Coots and dabchicks breed among the reeds, and both fight with the fish for possession of the soft-bodied food. In hot weather the perch swim near the surface, and then the aquatic birds have no chance against them. As a red-worm reaches the water, every fish rushes up, and sometimes a dozen open mouths reach the morsel at the same instant. If absolute possession has not been gained, there is a struggle, and the pool is lashed into quite a fishy commotion. The jaws are at work, the red fins flash like sparks of fire, and the bronze bodies seem all over the pool at once. There is an old pile which they love to haunt, and they are sometimes seen to gently rub their sides against it. In sharp contrast to the dusky perch are the silvery roach. These describe their graceful evolutions just on the side of the 'Perch-

pool,' but rarely invade it ; if they do, the perch at once become aggressive, and the 'water-sheep' are not long in making good their retreat. We have frequently taken large fish of both species from this preserve with fly. A quick eye and hand are requisite to successful fly-fishing for perch, and once indulged, it becomes quite a fascinating pursuit—how fascinating the following incident will show. A 'gentleman poacher' of the neighbourhood made a wager that he would bring to bank every one of a school of twenty-seven perch on a single evening. The bet was taken, and the feat was accomplished with only two lures—red-worms and half worn-out trout-fly. It may be added that every fish was returned to the hole evidently none the worse for its night's adventure.

There is occasionally another night denizen of the old 'Perch-hole,' which as an expert even out-poaches the poacher. We take our place by the stream-side and breathlessly wait. A faint whistle, unlike that of any bird, comes up-stream, and the dark water is moved. Trout cease to rise ; the whistle comes nearer, and then a rustle is heard. The osier-beds are visibly stirred, and some long, dark object makes its way between the parted stems. A movement would dispel the dark shadow. The rustle among the withy wands is repeated again and again, and now we know that the young otters have left their impregnable rocky bank and are following their dam. She has reconnoitred, and all is safe. Paddling down-stream come two objects, and, arriving at the pool, stop, tumble and frolic, rolling over and over, and round and round, and performing the most marvellous evolutions. They swing on a willow spray, and dash with lightning rapidity at a piece of floating bark, tumble with it, wrestle with it, and go through a hundred graceful movements ; then are motionless, then begin to play, and so continue for nearly an hour, when, as if suddenly alarmed, they rush down-stream to their feeding-grounds. Fishing is continued through the darkness, until, in the dewy meadow, another sound comes up the wind, and the deep sonorous voice of an otter-hound breaks into the dawn scene.

I have just been indulging in an hour's delicious laziness, dreamily watching a shoal of silvery-sided roach rising and falling towards the warm sunlight. It is hard to understand why anglers should call the roach a 'coarse' fish, as he is a very Beau Brummell of the waters. Coarse he may be as compared with salmon and trout, but in no other sense. The

character of the fish in the water is in keeping with his aristocratic appearance out of it. All his movements are slow and studied. Whatever he does he does gracefully. He is never in a hurry and rarely commits himself. Izaak Walton says you may take notice that, as the carp is accounted the water-fox for cunning, so the roach is accounted the water-sheep for his simplicity or foolishness. For our part, we have never found the roach so stupid as he is reputed. Let your float be too big or too brightly coloured, too near the bottom or the top, your bait not to his taste, and you will find that he can be even hypercritical upon occasion. He will swim above it or below it, he will swim round and round it, only at last to be disgusted

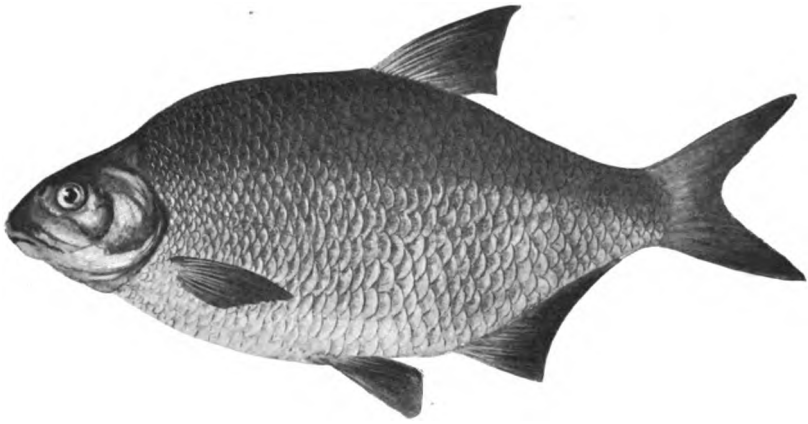


ROACH

at its clumsiness, to give a delicate wave of his tail, and glide gracefully away. And then the roach of mine acquaintance are like those of an eminent Frenchman—inclined to controversy, indecisive in conclusions. Sometimes they will bite, sometimes they will not; one never knows the reason why. To catch him the fisherman must have a subtle eye and a steady hand. One should take all sorts of precautions, for if he is curious he is at the same time excessively suspicious, and to catch him one must use the finest possible tackle.

The spot from which I watch my shoal of roach is half buried in lush summer grass, so that while I can see the fish they cannot see me. All their movements are the very poetry of motion, and the shoal seem to act by some subtle, hidden impulse. They occupy a deep pool in a trout-stream, and as the anglers complain that they destroy the ground-food of the trout for eight months of the year, we have set about catching

them. The small fry of their kind are easily taken in quantity, and to these the title of 'water-sheep' may be apt enough. An angler has to put forth all his wiles to get round the bigger fish, but by exercising a little patience he may overcome all their idiosyncrasies. After our experiences we must admit that the roach is a delicate fish to circumvent, always supposing that he has attained to any size. But once on the bank there is no gainsaying his beauty as he flops out his life among the docks and nettles. The fish are just clean and bright from spawning, and this is how they show: back and upper parts of a delicate weed green, flashing and glowing with metallic lustre; these colours pale as they approach the medial line and then turn



BREAM

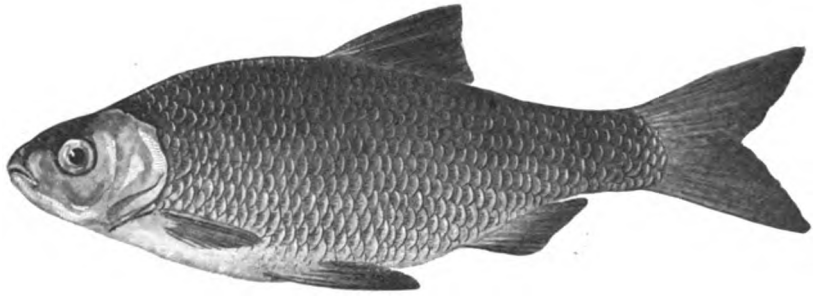
silver, which passes into white on the under parts; the back and tail fins stand out sharply in dull red, the anal and ventral fins glowing with crimson. These, with a symmetrical body and a tiny 'bloodlike' head turned into broad shoulders, complete the picture of a handsome fish. As much cannot be said of the edible qualities of the roach as for his gentlemanly appearance, though he has his champions in this respect too, only he requires to be daintily done in the cooking.

The roach is a fish of many waters, and seems peculiarly adapted to various environments. He is at home in sluggish streams with muddy bottoms, though his colours become a little dulled; here, too, in this clear tarn, high on the hills, he lives in contentment with the trout and rudd. In our trout-stream proper (whence we are trying to rid him) he seems particularly happy, only he steers clear of the rushing water, and quietly allows himself to drop down to where the water is 'logged.' In

addition to these situations, he may frequently be found in ponds, reservoirs, and even in river estuaries only a few miles above the sea. The regular haunts of the roach, however, are sluggish rivers; and the stiller reaches of the Thames produce some magnificent fish. London roach-anglers are said to excel all others, and it is even asserted that they have reduced the patient trade to a fine art—how fine only the initiated know. Roach spawn in May and June, and in the Thames shoals of them may be seen making their way to the higher reaches in search of suitable water-weed. Upon this the spawn is deposited, and so engrossed do they become in the act that their dorsal fins often show above the surface. The reproductive powers of the roach are enormous, and a matured fish may deposit as many as 480,000 eggs. When spawning is over the shoals drop down to the pebbly bottoms to scour themselves, and are in good condition in a remarkably short time after returning to the deeps. They will then rise to the fly like trout, but this does not last long, and by far the best bait are gentles (especially those of the bluebottle), or paste mixed with cotton-wool.

In our mind's eye there is at this moment a favourite 'dub,' where, in bygone years, we used to capture fish of great size and numbers, which were supposed to be roach. They turned out, however, to be rudd—'red-eyes,' as the old poachers called them. Walton was not at all sure of the rudd, and thought it was a kind of bastard roach; and he remarks that the Thames, below London Bridge affords the 'largest and fattest' in this 'nation.' According to the knowledge of his times, these red fish were produced by bream and roach mixing their eggs and milt together, and although they became numerous they never grew to any great size. This is quite erroneous. At this moment a brace of magnificent monsters are lying before me, and of all 'coarse' fish, surely they must be the handsomest. They have only been out of the water a couple of hours, are in the pink of condition, and just turn the scale at four pounds. And this is how they came by their death. We were searching for coots' eggs among the reeds of a mountain tarn, when two or three big fish began to rise from the warm shallow bank. A single hair-line was quickly tied, and the end fly dropped quietly among the shoal. There was a faint show of concentric rings in the water, then a mad plunge, and a two minutes' fight. The single strand of hair held out bravely, and a glorious rudd was pulled aboard, much to the excitement of the girls and dogs. It was a deep, handsome fish, with red eyes; cheek and gills

golden yellow, this darkening to blue and green on the back; sides bright coppery, golden below; belly tinged with pink, and shot with metallic lustre; all the fins red; the body suddenly narrowing towards the tail, which is deeply indented. One of the characteristics of the rudd is its tenacity of life, fish sometimes showing signs of life after having been out of the water several hours. During the day the rudd lies in the deepest part of its haunt, making for the shallows at morning and evening. At the former time it is a ground-feeder, but when it rises from the deeper water it takes flies from the surface. We came to the knowledge of this fact after a somewhat heated experience. After fishing all day and taking nothing save a few small roach,



RUDD

the sun got behind a dark thunder-cloud, when the rudd immediately commenced to rise. As twilight increased the mere seemed everywhere broken by bubbles, and this time, equipped with flies dressed on fine gut, the slaughter that ensued was great. That long summer evening was a memorable one, and in weight it proved the best fishing of a lifetime. The larger fish fought pluckily, but, as there was no method in their madness, they were pulled out one by one. Yet what is the 'play' of a hundredweight of coarse rudd to that of a ten-pound salmon fresh run from the sea? But are not comparisons odious? A long day in the old slimy punt has its quiet joys as well as one after salmon and trout; and then each can be indulged when the other is prohibited.

A PRIZE COMPETITION

THE Proprietors of the *Badminton Magazine* offer a prize of Ten Guineas each month for the best original photograph sent in representing any sporting subject. Ten other prizes will also be given away each month, each of them consisting of an original drawing by one or other of the artists who illustrate the Magazine. Good clear pictures are of course necessary, and when possible the negative should be sent as well as the print. Competitors may also send any photographs they have by them on two conditions: that they have been taken by the sender, and that they have never been previously published. A few lines explaining when and where the photographs were taken should accompany each negative. Residents in the country who have access to shooting parties, or who chance to be in the neighbourhood when hounds are running, will doubtless find interesting subjects, and these will also be provided at football or cricket matches, wherever golf, cycling, fishing, skating, polo, athletics are practised. Racing and steeplechasing, including Hunt Meetings and Point-to-point contests, should also supply excellent material. All matters of public school interest will be welcome.

THE JANUARY COMPETITION

On the whole we were somewhat disappointed with the result of the January competition, the photographs being neither in quantity nor quality what we had anticipated. As regards adjudication of the prizes, it was so difficult to decide between the merit of the bulk of those received that we have settled the matter by sending a prize to every one who forwarded a photograph. Some much better pictures have arrived for the February competition, the result of which will be announced in the April number—as the Magazine goes to press long before the end of the month, and photographs may arrive up to the last day, it will be understood that we cannot give February results in March, and so on. Next month we shall probably print some specimens of what the prize-winners have sent.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

IN a few days Flying Fox will come up for auction and there is naturally much curiosity as to what he will fetch. One thing that seems certain is that he will not make as much as he would have won in stakes had all gone well with him. I am told that John Watts, the jockey, will not have it that Flying Fox is really an extraordinarily good horse, that he ranks, that is to say, with Ormonde, St. Simon, Isinglass, and one or two others of the absolutely front rank ; but looking through the entries for the Ten Thousand Pounds races—and it must be remembered that there is a fourth this year, the Century Stakes, run at Sandown on the 27th of next month—it seemed impossible that if he had started he could have been beaten. The reserve is not known at the time of writing ; whether it will be announced at the Kingsclere sale I am not aware, but my impression is that 30,000 guineas will be found to be the figure ; and I believe I am right in saying that 25,000 guineas have been offered and refused, or rather that John Porter informed some one who wanted to buy that the sum would not be accepted. In these days of heavy stud fees my own idea is that Flying Fox is well worth 30,000 guineas, and may very likely prove worth a vast deal more. Admittedly he is not the handsomest of horses, but handsome

is as handsome does, and his is certainly a glorious line of ancestry. Flying Fox, winner of Two Thousand, Derby and Leger; son of Orme, a son of Ormonde, winner of Two Thousand, Derby and Leger; a son of Bend Or, winner of the Derby; a son of Doncaster, winner of the Derby; a son of Stockwell, who was just beaten for the Derby, indeed, but won the St. Leger and was doubtless one of the best horses ever known; a son of The Baron, winner of the Leger. Here is a pedigree not to be surpassed. I will not go into figures to show how I calculate the value of Flying Fox, even with the drawback of a heavy insurance on him, but I fully expect him to fetch over 30,000 guineas.

They had a race meeting the other day on the banks of the Tugela. I don't quite know what the horses may have been like, but assuredly there is no lack of steeplechase riders in South Africa, men whom we miss sorely here, and shall continue to miss when the polo season comes round. It was reported the other day that Mr. Reggie Ward had his horse shot under him, but it appears that the story was not quite correct; a horse of his was shot, an old 'chaser who has done service between the flags in England, but the popular gentleman rider was not on him at the time. No one expected that there would be any Grand Military, or Household Brigade at Hawthorn Hill, and the abandonment of those fixtures has been announced. It could not well be otherwise. Mr. Ward is with General French; so is Major Hughes-Onslow, under the command of another ex-steeplechase rider, best of good fellows and keenest of soldiers, Colonel R. B. Fisher; so is Mr. De Crespigny, who, it is said, has well deserved and will very likely receive the Victoria Cross; and Captain Wilfred Ricardo is shut up in Pretoria, having been captured while, with characteristic gallantry, endeavouring to save a wounded trooper. Mr. Algy Lawson is also absent; so is Captain Wiggin, who had been training on as a rider; so is Captain Paget, and poor Blundell, who always rode at Hawthorn Hill, was treacherously murdered while succouring a wounded Boer. Mr. 'Philbeach,' who scored twice at Hawthorn Hill last year, has managed to get himself attached to the 10th Hussars and is galloping over the Veldt instead of over Sir Robert Wilmot's pastures. Except Captain Murray-Thriepland, nearly all the prominent soldier-horsemen are away doing the noble service that their friends

confidently expected of them, and they are now about to share in the coming triumph. It will doubtless be a bitter disappointment to Mr. H. W. Massingham and his gang of associates when the tide has turned and their venerated white-flag-deriding Boers are meeting their well-deserved fate, but Mr. Massingham and his friends have had their period of enjoyment while the English armies have been checked, and they really cannot expect to have everything their own way always.

Of the fifteen horses I named last month as having, as I supposed, a chance for the Grand National, fourteen have accepted, Cathal being the only absentee. I am afraid that 12 st. 13 lb. is too much for Manifesto, even if he retains his best form, and it remains to be seen whether Drogheda will not be the chosen of the stable. It is rarely that a National horse has speed enough to win a two-mile hurdle race as he did at Kempton, though the field he beat there was not a brilliant one, and he may be a better horse than I have hitherto believed. Hidden Mystery seems over-weighted with 12 st., and I doubt The Shaker standing. The same may be said with still more confidence of The Sapper, whom I see described as a bargain at over 700 guineas, and a proof of the fact that 'chasers are cheap because of the war. I know that his late trainer had a commission to buy him if he thought that he was going within his value, and he gladly saw him taken elsewhere. It is highly improbable that he will stand. Ambush II. was generally set down as having been overdone last year. I was dicussing the subject the other day with some of those who know most about him, and they by no means agreed with this view. They assured me that last March he was as well as he could have been, but they do not seem to be particularly sanguine at his success on the 30th of the present month. A general fancy among good judges is Romanoff; but there is understood to be some doubt as to whether he will run. He is very fairly handicapped, and it is difficult to imagine an owner whose horse has a really good chance in the National refusing to send him to the post. Mr. Lambton, however, likes to ride Romanoff himself; he is now unable to do so, and it is said may keep him for races in which he can ride.

As for Ford of Fyne, a friend of mine, whom I regard as the best steeplechase rider of the day, offered before the sale to

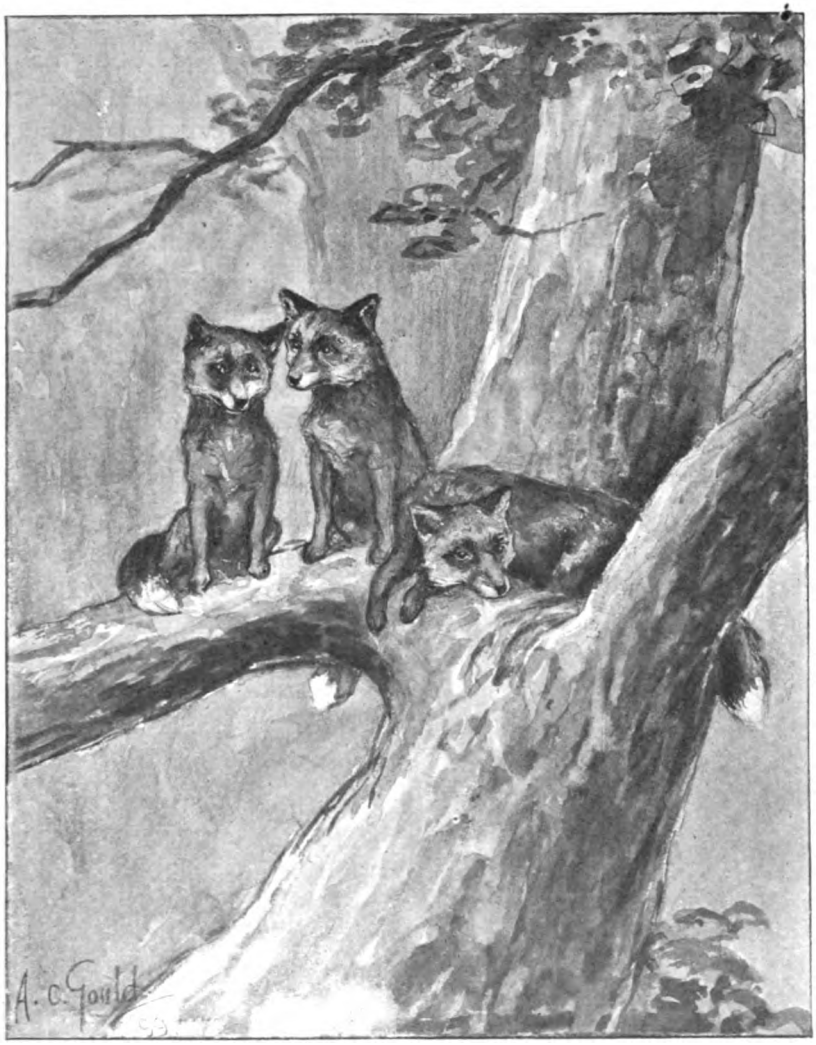
bet the handicapper a thousand pounds to half a crown that the horse did not start, though he was checked by Mr. Mainwaring's reply that if he meant it he would take the bet, buy the horse, and ride it to the post himself, whereby he would make sure of securing six or seven hundred pounds—the difference between the £1000 and the sum he would probably have had to give for the horse. I think, therefore, we may safely disregard Ford of Fyne. I am still warned that Model will be dangerous, but surely his career does not in the very least suggest winning the National? I fancied Grudon last year, but he seems to have gone quite to the bad; Dead Level no doubt has a sort of outside chance, but his friends do not claim more for him. Fairland appears to have a habit of falling, and if she does that elsewhere, she is more likely to do it at Liverpool. Elliman is sound for the moment; if he stands is quite a possible winner, and Mrs. Grundy is not an impossible one. I remarked last month that I had been warned Levanter might create a surprise, though there is most certainly nothing about his running in this country that suggests the possibility of success. He was badly beaten at Manchester by animals of a most moderate character whom he met on terms advantageous to himself, and if he were to win a little sensation would no doubt be created. The race will not be run for a month after these Notes appear; I am writing early in February, and all sorts of chops and changes may happen. There is Tipperary Boy, who is extremely likely to break down in the course of the next few weeks, but who may be very dangerous if he gets to the post fit and well. If Romanoff starts and stands up during the race—one year I remember eleven out of sixteen fell and the best horse may be knocked over—I shall confidently expect to find him, in current slang, 'there or thereabouts.'

It is not a little disgusting to hear some of the remarks made any afternoon on any race course during the 'cross country season as to horses that are 'not having a go,' 'not out to-day,' 'likely to run better next week,' and so on. It is admitted that many people talk atrocious nonsense on race courses. If they lose money their idea is, not that their own judgment is poor, or even that they have been defeated by bad luck, but that a robbery has been committed. I know that well, and have often heard suspicion cast on riders and owners who I have been perfectly certain, for the soundest possible reasons, have been heartily anxious to win; still, at the same time, I must confess

that I not seldom see horses beaten at the finish that could have won races, or, at any rate, would have gone extremely near to winning them it their jockeys had only let them. The situation is a very difficult one. I saw a horse most palpably stopped at Gatwick not long since. Immediately after the race the friend whom I have already mentioned in these Notes as in my opinion the best horseman of the day met me and commented on the race, 'the most outrageous thing he had ever seen in his life,' he said; and coming across another friend soon afterwards, a steward of the National Hunt Committee, a most scrupulous gentleman, and one of the very best all-round sportsmen in the country, in course of conversation I mentioned the matter to him. He was sad. 'When I was elected to the Committee,' he said, 'I was full of ardour, and eager to reform abuses, but the business is horribly discouraging. If you have a man up he is provided with a dozen excuses, several of them very likely more or less plausible, or so reasonable, at any rate, that it is practically impossible to do anything to him.'

This is no doubt true; and I saw how keenly my friend felt the state of affairs; but we surely cannot leave it at that, and let rogues know that there is little danger of their meeting with their deserts because it is so difficult to prove their offence. A fussy steward who is suspicious in the wrong place does more harm than good, but I certainly think that the stewards ought to be more alert than they are. If they inquire into what really looks an ugly matter, a simple explanation, confirmed by impartial testimony, may often be forthcoming to show that there was nothing wrong; and an honest man would surely have no objection to clear himself by saying just what had taken place. But, in fact, the rascals are tolerably well known. Stewards, if they are at all acquainted with the ins and outs of the sport, would be quite well aware whom they had to watch. A few weeks since at Lingfield only five runners went to the post for a hurdle race, and it was a matter of humorous comment in the ring that one of the horses was not trying. 'When he *is* out,' a leading bookmaker remarked to me, 'there won't be much of a price against that one!' The horse in question has not run since; when he does, I expect his performance will be in striking contrast to that which he gave on his last appearance, and I suppose that if the handicappers were not on the alert, several pounds will be taken off him. This was a case where stewards who knew, and were prepared to do, their duty

should have had the owner before them ; the matter would have been reported in the Racing Calendar, and attention drawn to it, so that it would be difficult to carry out the little scheme to which running a bye at Lingfield was the prelude.



Some years ago, while preparing my book 'Sketches in the Hunting Field,' I made some remark about the finding of a fox in a tree. Two letters soon afterwards reached the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, which I was then editing. One of them sarcastically demanded to know whether I supposed that

the discovery of a fox in a tree was an unusual occurrence; the writer of the other indignantly desired to be informed whether it was my ignorance that induced me to make the statement, or whether I was foolishly practising on the credulity of my readers, seeing that foxes had not wings and could not fly. An amusing correspondence ensued, some of the writers supporting one view, the others the contrary, and the letters greatly entertained the late Duke of Beaufort, who most kindly promised to send me an account of his many experiences with foxes in trees in various parts of his hunt whenever I was ready to wind up the discussion. One fox, indeed, he undertook to show me when I was at Badminton soon after the correspondence started, and we found it lying on a branch, its habitual resting-place in the park, quite close to the box where Petronel then stood: we crept cautiously round, and there the creature was. I believe he distinctly saw us, but took no notice. The recollection comes to my mind by the account of three foxes that lately, as recorded in the papers, had their habitation up a tree in Mr. Fernie's country. One of them is described by an eye-witness as having been quite thirty feet from the ground, and the three were seen at the same time 'perched like monkeys among the thicker branches.' I do not suppose any hunting man has ever had doubts on the subject, but my correspondents a few years ago showed that there were many non-hunting men who believed that the idea of a fox in a tree was altogether absurd.

As usual, when I mention the subject of systems at Monte Carlo, a vigorous correspondence results. I remarked last month that all systems were hopeless, but that many of them might prove successful for a time. Several letters have reached me from persistent punters, who describe systems which they have found remunerative, and they are convinced that good fortune will continue to attend them. I am sorry I have not room for any of these letters, as I always like publishing communications when I can; for if a man takes the trouble to write me a letter it is nearly always because he has something interesting to say. But none of the systems set forth is new—a new one is no doubt impossible—and in every one such a run of bad luck as is extremely likely to occur at any moment would upset everything. It is wonderful what the table will do when you

don't want it to. I went to look on one evening and noted that five reds had come up. I was standing behind a seated friend, and remarked to him that there seemed rather a run on red. 'It came up six times before you arrived,' he answered. That made eleven, and I was tempted to back black. Red came up again. Surely, I thought, there couldn't be twelve reds, so I doubled my stake on black, but there *was* a twelfth. There couldn't be thirteen, I thought, and I had an increased bet on black, but there was a thirteenth, a fourteenth, and a fifteenth. Then I had a dash on black to get all my losses back. Up came red for the sixteenth time, and I have always regretted that I did not wait and see whether it came up any oftener, but after that sixteenth I was not at the moment in a position to take any more active interest in roulette.

There is an idea that it is easier to win at *trente et quarante* and I believe mathematicians demonstrate that the odds are not so heavy against the player. It is also really strange how what is called 'the run of the table,' appears to be foreseen by punters, though it is based upon no explicable rule. I met a friend at the *trente et quarante* tables some time since who is always eager to instruct those whom he regards as less astute mortals in the rules of the game. I put down a stake on the red, and he was greatly distressed. 'You shouldn't do that,' he said, 'you are sure to lose; you see all the money is on the other side!' I couldn't perceive any reason why it should be there, left my stake down and all the money on the other side a moment later was raked in by the croupier. The wise people thereupon changed over, I again opposed them, having no theories and trusting absolutely to chance. 'Oh, that's quite wrong!' my friend earnestly admonished me; 'all those people have gone over, you see, you ought to go with them.' In a spirit of sheer contrariness I persisted in my ignorant play, again won, and continuing to persist, to the great distress of my adviser, who kept on showing me that I was hopelessly and utterly absurd, came away with a heavy load of gold. Opposing the run of the table struck me then as by no means a bad game. I have tried it several times since. On the whole the *trente et quarante* table must owe me a lot of money, and the debt is likely to increase if I go on playing. I do not blind myself to that fact; but for some mysterious reason, I have no glimmering

of an idea what it is, it certainly happens that more often than not the side on which the bulk of the money is staked is successful.

One of my correspondents, noting that I have no belief in any system, asks how he can play so as 'to have *some* chance of winning, to avoid losing very much, and generally to escape making an idiot of himself;' and he presses for a reply. If after all I have said I must advise, I should suggest his staking at *trente et quarante*, on red or black as he pleases. If he wins, withdraw his stake and leave the rest down, a louis, a hundred francs, or whatever his unit may be. If he wins again, and is a bold man, he may try the same colour once more, leaving all down, but afterwards I really do not know how to advise him. He may leave it all down, take some of it up, or change all or part of it over to the other side; but the odds are against his being pleased with the result. If he takes up part of it, and the same colour continues, he is likely to think what an idiot he was not to leave the whole lot down. If he goes over to black and red continues, he will blame himself angrily for not having had the sense to follow his run of luck. In point of fact, whatever he does is likely to disappoint him; because even if a man wins he never thinks he has won nearly enough, such is the insatiability of the gambler.

The Badminton Magazine

FANNY FITZ'S GAMBLE

BY E. Œ. SOMERVILLE AND MARTIN ROSS

'WHERE'S Fanny Fitz?' said Captain Spicer to his wife.

They were leaning over the sea-wall in front of a little fishing hotel in Connemara, idling away the interval usually vouchsafed by the Irish car-driver between the hour at which he is ordered to be ready and that at which he appears. It was a misty morning in early June, the time of all times for Connemara, did the tourist only know it. The mountains towered green and grey above the palely shining sea in which they stood; the air was full of the sound of streams and the scent of wild flowers; the thin mist had in it something of the dazzle of the sunlight that was close behind it. Little Mrs. Spicer pulled down her veil: even after a fortnight's fly-fishing she still retained some regard for her complexion.

'She says she can't come,' she responded; 'she has letters to write or something—and this is our last day!'

Mrs. Spicer evidently found the fact provoking.

'On this information the favourite receded to 33 to 1,' remarked Captain Spicer. 'I think you may as well chuck it, my dear.'

'I should like to beat them both!' said his wife, flinging a

pebble into the rising tide that was very softly mouthing the seaweedy rocks below them.

'Well, here's Rupert; you can begin on him.'

'Nothing would give me greater pleasure!' said Rupert's sister vindictively. 'A great teasing, squabbling baby! Oh, how I hate fools! and they are *both* fools!—Oh, there you are, Rupert,' a well-simulated blandness invading her voice; 'and what's Fanny Fitz doing?'

'She's trying to do a Mayo man over a horse-deal,' replied Mr. Rupert Gunning.

'A horse-deal!' repeated Mrs. Spicer incredulously. 'Fanny buying a horse! Oh, impossible!'

'Well, I don't know about that,' said Mr. Gunning, 'she's trying pretty hard. I gave her my opinion——'

'I'll take my oath you did,' observed Captain Spicer.

'——And as she didn't seem to want it, I came away,' continued Mr. Gunning imperturbably. 'Be calm, Maudie; it takes two days and two nights to buy a horse in these parts; you'll be home in plenty of time to interfere, and here's the car. Don't waste the morning.'

'I never know if you're speaking the truth or no,' complained Mrs. Spicer; nevertheless, she scrambled on to the car without delay. She and her brother had at least one point in common, the fanatic enthusiasm of the angler.

In the meantime, Miss Fanny Fitzroy's negotiations were proceeding in the hotel yard. Fanny herself was standing in a stable doorway, with her hands in the pockets of her bicycle skirt. She had no hat on, and the mild breeze blew her hair about; it was light brown, with a brightness in it; her eyes also were light brown, with gleams in them like the shallow places in a Connemara trout stream. At this moment they were scanning with approval, tempered by anxiety, the muddy legs of a lean and lengthy grey filly, who was fearfully returning her gaze from between the strands of a touzled forelock. The owner of the filly, a small man, with a face like a serious elderly monkey, stood at her head in a silence that was the outcome partly of stupidity, partly of caution, and partly of lack of English speech. The conduct of the matter was in the hands of a friend, a tall young man with a black beard, nimble of tongue and gesture, profuse in courtesies.

'Well, indeed, yes, your ladyship,' he was saying glibly, 'the breed of horses is greatly improving in these parts, and them hackney horses——'

'Oh,' interrupted Miss Fitzroy hastily, 'I won't have her if she's a hackney.'

The eyes of the owner sought those of the friend in a gaze that clearly indicated the question.

'What'll ye say to her now?'

The position of the vendors was becoming a little complicated. They had come over through the mountains, from the borders of Mayo, to sell the filly to the hotel-keeper for posting, and were primed to the lips with the tale of her hackney lineage. The hotel-keeper had unconditionally refused to trade, and here, when a heaven-sent alternative was delivered into their hands, they found themselves hampered by the coils of a cast-off lie. No shade, however, of hesitancy appeared on the open countenance of the friend. He approached Miss Fitzroy with a mincing step, a deprecating wave of the hand, and a deeply respectful ogle. He was going to adopt the desperate resource of telling the truth, but to tell the truth profitably was a part that required rather more playing than any other.

'Well, your honour's ladyship,' he began, with a glance at the hotel ostler, who was standing near cleaning a bit in industrious and sarcastic silence, 'it is a fact, no doubt, that I mentioned here this morning that this young mare was of the Government hackney stock. But, according as I understand from this poor man that owns her, he bought her in a small fair over the Tuam side, and the man that sold her could take his oath she was by the Grey Dawn—sure you'd know it out of her colour.'

'Why didn't you say so before?' asked Miss Fitzroy, bending her straight brows in righteous severity.

'Well, that's true indeed, your ladyship; but, afther all—I declare a man couldn't hardly live without he'd tell a lie some times!'

Fanny Fitz stooped, rather hurriedly, and entered upon a renewed examination of the filly's legs. Even Rupert Gunning, after his brief and unsympathetic survey, had said she had good legs; in fact, he had only been able to crab her for the length of her back, and he, as Fanny Fitz reflected with a heat that took no heed of metaphor, was the greatest crabber that ever croaked.

'What are you asking for her?' she demanded with a sudden access of decision.

There was a pause. The owner of the filly and his friend withdrew a step or two and conferred together in Irish at

lightning speed. The filly held up her head and regarded her surroundings with guileless wonderment. Fanny Fitz made a mental dive into her bankbook, and arrived at the varied conclusions that she was £30 to the good, that on that sum she had to weather out the summer and autumn, besides pacifying various cormorants (thus she designated her long-suffering tradespeople), and that every one had told her that if she only kept her eyes open in Connemara she might be able to buy something cheap and make a pot of money on it.

'This poor honest man,' said the friend, returning to the charge, 'says he couldn't part her without he'd get twenty-eight pounds for her; and, thank God, it's little your ladyship would think of giving that!'

Fanny Fitz's face fell.

'Twenty-eight pounds!' she echoed. 'Oh, that's ridiculous!'

The friend turned to the owner, and, with a majestic wave of the hand, signalled to him to retire. The owner, without a change of expression, coiled up the rope halter and started slowly and implacably for the gate; the friend took off his hat with wounded dignity. Every gesture implied that the whole transaction was buried in an irrevocable past.

Fanny Fitz's eyes followed the party as they silently left the yard, the filly stalking dutifully with a long and springy step beside her master. It was a moment full of bitterness, and of a quite irrational indignation against Rupert Gunning.

'I beg your pardon, miss,' said the ostler, at her elbow, 'would ye be willing to give twenty pounds for the mare, and he to give back a pound luckpenny?'

'I would!' said the impulsive Fanny Fitz, after the manner of her nation.

When the fishing party returned that afternoon Miss Fitzroy met them at the hall door.

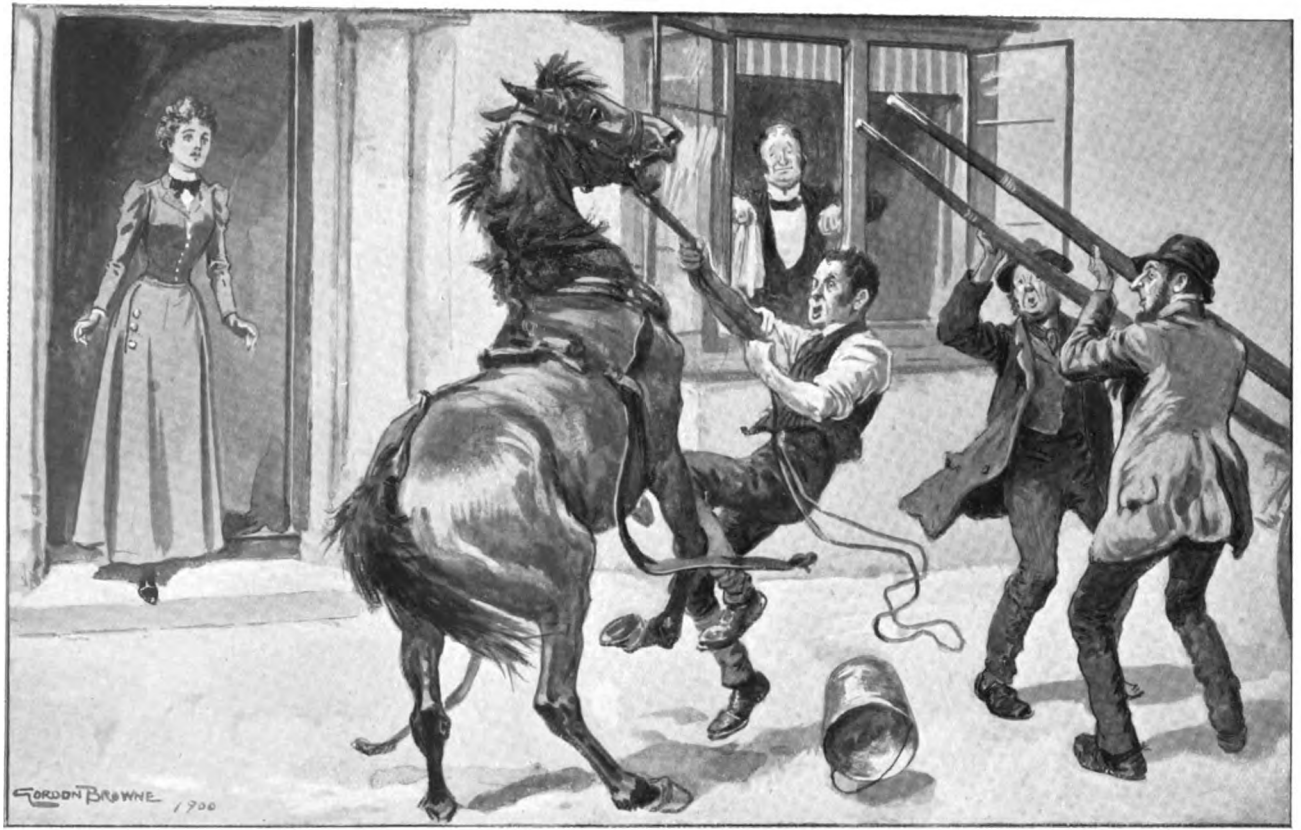
'Well, my dear,' she said airily to Mrs. Spicer, 'what sort of sport have you had? I've enjoyed myself immensely. I've bought a horse!'

Mrs. Spicer sat, paralysed, on the seat of the outside car, disregarding her brother's outstretched hands.

'Fanny!' she exclaimed, in tones fraught with knowledge of her friend's resources and liabilities.

'Yes, I have!' went on Fanny Fitz, undaunted. 'Mr. Gunning saw her. He said she was a long-backed brute. Didn't you, Mr. Gunning?'

Rupert Gunning lifted his small sister bodily off the car.



THE SPECTACLE OF THE OSTLER BEING HURTLED ACROSS THE YARD

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He was a tall sallow man, with a big nose and a small, much-bitten, fair moustache.

'Yes, I believe I did,' he said shortly.

Mrs. Spicer's blue eyes grew round with consternation.

'Then you really have bought the thing!' she cried. 'Oh, Fanny, you idiot! And what on earth are you going to do with it?'

'It can sleep on the foot of my bed to-night,' returned Fanny Fitz, 'and I'll ride it into Galway to-morrow! Mr. Gunning, you can ride halfway if you like!'

But Mr. Gunning had already gone into the hotel with his rod and fishing basket. He had a gift, that he rarely lost a chance of exercising, of provoking Fanny Fitz to wrath, and the fact that he now declined her challenge may or may not be accounted for by the gloom consequent upon an empty fishing-basket.

Next morning the various hangers-on in the hotel-yard were provided with occupation and entertainment of the most satiating description. Fanny Fitz's new purchase was being despatched to the nearest railway station, some fourteen miles off. It had been arranged that the ostler was to drive her there in one of the hotel cars, which should then return with a horse that was coming from Galway for the hotel owner; nothing could have fitted in better. Unfortunately the only part of the arrangement that refused to fit in was the filly. Even while Fanny Fitz was finishing her toilet, high-pitched howls of objurgation were rising, alarmingly, from the stable-yard, and on reaching the scene of action she was confronted by the spectacle of the ostler being hurtled across the yard by the filly, to whose head he was clinging, while two helpers upheld the shafts of the outside car from which she had fled. All were shouting directions and warnings at the tops of their voices, the hotel dog was barking, the filly alone was silent, but her opinions were unmistakable.

A waiter in shirt-sleeves was leaning comfortably out of a window, watching the fray and offering airy suggestion and comment.

'It's what I'm telling them, miss,' he said easily, including Fanny Fitz in the conversation; 'if they get that one into Recess to-night it'll not be under a side-car.'

'But the man I bought her from,' said Fanny Fitz, lamentably addressing the company, 'told me that he drove his mother to chapel with her last Sunday.'

'Musha then, may the divil sweep hell with him and burn the broom afther!' panted the ostler in bitter wrath, as he slewed the filly to a standstill. 'I wish himself and his mother was behind her when I went putting the crupper on her! B'leeve me, they'd drop their chat!'

'Sure I knew that young Geogheghan back in Westport,' remarked the waiter, 'and all the good there is about him was a little handy talk. Take the harness off her, Mick, and throw a saddle on her. It's little I think meself of canthering her into Recess!'

'How handy ye are yerself with your talk!' retorted the ostler; 'it's canthering round the table ye'll be doing, and it's what'll suit ye betther!'

Fanny Fitz began to laugh. 'He might ride the saddle of mutton!' she said, with a levity that, under the circumstances, did her credit. 'You'd better take the harness off, and you'll have to get her to Recess for me somehow.'

The ostler took no notice of this suggestion; he was repeating to himself: 'Ride the saddle o' mutton! By dam I never heard the like o' that! Ride the saddle o' mutton——!' He suddenly gave a yell of laughing, and in the next moment the startled filly dragged the reins from his hand with a tremendous plunge, and in half a dozen bounds was out of the yard-gate and clattering down the road.

There was an instant of petrifaction. 'Diddlety—iddlety—idlety!' chanted the waiter with far-away sweetness.

Fanny Fitz and the ostler were outside the gate simultaneously: the filly was already rounding the first turn of the road; two strides more, and she was gone as though she had never been, and 'Oh, my nineteen pounds!' thought poor Fanny Fitz.

As the ostler was wont to say in subsequent repetitions of the story: 'Thanks be to God, the reins was rotten!' But for this it is highly probable that Miss Fitzroy's speculation would have collapsed abruptly with broken knees, possibly with a broken neck. Having galloped into them in the course of the first hundred yards, they fell from her as the green withes fell from Samson, one long streamer alone remaining to lash her flanks as she fled. Some five miles from the hotel she met a wedding, and therewith leaped the bog-drain by the side of the road and 'took to the mountains,' as the bridegroom poetically described it to Fanny Fitz, who, with the ostler, was pursuing the fugitive on an outside car.

'If that's the way,' said the ostler, 'ye mightn't get her again before the winther.'

Fanny Fitz left the matter, together with a further instalment of the thirty pounds, in the hands of the sergeant of police, and went home, and, improbable as it may appear, in the course of something less than ten days she received an invoice from the local railway station, Enniscar, briefly stating: '1 horse arrd. Please remove.'

Many people, most of her friends indeed, were quite unaware that Fanny Fitz possessed a home. Beyond the fact that it supplied her with a permanent address, and a place at which she was able periodically to deposit consignments of half-worn-out clothes, Fanny herself was not prone to rate the privilege very highly. Possibly two very elderly maiden stepsisters are discouraging to the homeing instinct; the fact remained, that as long as the youngest Miss Fitzroy possessed the wherewithal to tip a housemaid she was but rarely seen within the decorous precincts of Craffroe Lodge.

Let it not for a moment be imagined that the Connemara filly was to become a member of this household. Even Fanny Fitz, with all her optimism, knew better than to expect that William O'Loughlin, who divided his attentions between the ancient cob and the garden, and ruled the elder Misses Fitzroy with a rod of iron, would undertake the education of anything more skittish than early potatoes. It was to the stable, or rather cow-house, of one Johnny Connolly, that the new purchase was ultimately conveyed, and it was thither that Fanny Fitz, with apples in one pocket and sugar in the other, conducted her ally, Mr. Freddy Alexander, the master of the Craffroe Hounds. Fanny Fitz's friendship with Freddy was one of long standing, and was soundly based on the fact that when she had been eighteen he had been fourteen; and though it may be admitted that this is a discrepancy that somewhat fades with time, even Freddy's mother acquitted Fanny Fitz of any ulterior motive; and Freddy was an only son.

'She was very rejected last night afther she coming in,' said Johnny Connolly, manipulating as he spoke the length of rusty chain and bit of stick that fastened the door. 'I think it was lonesome she was on the thrain.'

Fanny Fitz and Mr. Alexander peered into the dark and vasty interior of the cow-house; from a remote corner they heard a heavy breath and the jingle of a training bit, but they saw nothing.

'I have the cavesson and all on her ready for ye, and I was thinking we'd take her south into Mr. Gunning's land. His finces is very good,' continued Johnny, going cautiously in; 'wait till I pull her out.'

Johnny Connolly was a horse trainer who did a little farming, or a farmer who did a little horse training, and his management of young horses followed no known rules, and indeed knew none, but it was generally successful. He fed them by rule of thumb; he herded them in hustling, squabbling parties in pitch-dark sheds; he ploughed them at eighteen months; he beat them with a stick like dogs when they transgressed, and like dogs they loved him. He had what gardeners call 'a lucky hand' with them, and they throve with him, and he had, moreover, that gift of winning their wayward hearts that comes neither by cultivation nor by knowledge, but is innate and unconscious. Already, after two days, he and the Connemara filly understood each other; she sniffed distantly and with profound suspicion at Fanny and her offerings, and entirely declined to permit Mr. Alexander to estimate her height on the questionable assumption that the point of his chin represented 15.2, but she allowed Johnny to tighten or slacken every buckle in her new and unfamiliar costume without protest.

'I think she'll make a ripping good mare,' said the enthusiastic Freddy, as he and Fanny Fitz followed her out of the yard; 'I don't care what Rupert Gunning says, she's any amount of quality, and I bet you'll do well over her.'

'She'll make a real nice fashionable mare,' remarked Johnny, opening the gate of a field and leading the filly in, 'and she's a sweet galloper, but she's very frightful in herself. Faith, I thought she'd run up the wall from me the first time I went to feed her! Ah ha! none o' yer thricks!' as the filly, becoming enjoyably aware of the large space of grass round her, let fling a kick of malevolent exuberance at the two fox-terriers who were trotting decorously in her rear.

It was soon found that, in the matter of 'stone gaps,' the A B C of Irish jumping, Connemara had taught the grey filly all there was to learn.

'Begor, Miss Fanny, she's as crabbed as a mule!' said her teacher approvingly. 'D'ye mind the way she soaks the hind legs up into her! We'll give her a bank now.'

At the bank, however, the trouble began. Despite the ministrations of Mr. Alexander and a long whip, despite the

precept and example of Mr. Connolly, who performed prodigies of activity in running his pupil in at the bank and leaping on to it himself, the filly time after time either ran her chest against it or swerved from it at the last instant with a vigour that plucked her preceptor from off it and scattered Fanny Fitz and the fox-terriers like leaves before the wind. These latter were divided between sycophantic and shrieking indignation with the filly for declining to jump, and a most wary attention to the sphere of influence of the whip. They were a mother and daughter, as conceited, as craven, and as wholly attractive as only the judiciously spoiled ladies of their race can be. Their hearts were divided between Fanny Fitz and the cook, the rest of them appertained to the Misses Harriet and Rachel Fitzroy, whom they regarded with toleration tinged with boredom.

'I tell ye now, Masther Freddy, 'tis no good for us to be goin' on sourin' the mare this way. 'Tis what the fince is too steep for her. Maybe she never seen the like in that backwards counthry she came from. We'll give her the bank below with the ditch in front of it. 'Tisn't very big at all, and she'll be bound to lep with the sup of wather that's in it.'

Thus Johnny Connolly, wiping a very heated brow.

The bank below was a broad and solid structure, well padded with grass and bracken, and it had a sufficiently obvious ditch, of some three feet wide, on the nearer side. The grand effort was duly prepared for. The bank was solemnly exhibited to the filly ; the dogs, who had with unerring instinct seated themselves on its most jumpable portion, were scattered with one threat of the whip to the horizon. Fanny tore away the last bit of bracken that might prove a discouragement, and Johnny issued his final order.

'Come inside me with the whip, sir, and give her one good belt at the last!'

No one knows exactly how it happened. There was a rush, a scramble, a backward sliding, a great deal of shouting, and the Connemara filly was couched in the narrow ditch at right angles to the fence, with the water oozing up through the weeds round her, like a wild duck on its nest ; and at this moment Mr. Rupert Gunning appeared suddenly on the top of the bank and inspected the scene with an amusement that he made little attempt to conceal.

It took half an hour, and ropes, and a number of Rupert Gunning's haymakers, to get Fanny Fitz's speculation on to its legs again, and Mr. Gunning's comments during the process

successfully sapped Fanny Fitz's control of her usually equable temper.

'He's a beast!' she said wrathfully to Freddy, as the party moved soberly homewards in the burning June afternoon, with the horseflies clustering round them, and the smell of new-mown grass wafting to them from where, a field or two away, came the rattle of Rupert Gunning's mowing-machine. 'A crabbing beast! It was just like my luck that he should come up at that moment and have the supreme joy of seeing Gamble' —Gamble was the filly's rarely-used name—'wallowing in the ditch! That's the second time he's scored off me. I *pity* poor little Maudie Spicer for having such a brother!'

In spite of this discouraging *début*, the filly's education went on and prospered. She marched discreetly along the roads in long reins; she champed detested mouthfuls of rusty mouthing bit in the process described by Johnny Connolly as 'getting her neck broke'; she trotted for treadmill half-hours in the lunge; and during and in spite of all these penances, she fattened up and thickened out until that great authority, Mr. Alexander, pronounced it would be a sin not to send her up to the Dublin Horse Show, as she was just the mare to catch an English dealer's eye.

'But sure ye wouldn't sell her, miss?' said her faithful nurse, 'and Masther Freddy afther starting the hounds and all!'

Fanny Fitz scratched the filly softly under the jawbone, and thought of the document in her pocket—long, and blue, and inscribed with the too familiar notice in red ink: 'An early settlement will oblige.'

'I must, Johnny,' she said, 'worse luck!'

'Well, indeed, that's too bad, miss,' said Johnny, comprehendingly. 'There was a mare I had one time, and I sold her before I went to America. God knows, afther she went from me, whenever I'd look at her winkers hanging on the wall I'd have to cry. I never seen a sight of her till three years afther that, afther I coming home. I was coming out o' the fair at Enniscar, an' I was talking to a man an' we coming down Dangan Hill, and what was in it but herself coming up in a cart! An' I didn't look at her, good nor bad, nor know her, but sorra bit but she knew me talking, an' she turned in to me with the cart! "Ho, ho, ho!" says she, and she stuck her nose into me like she'd be kissing me. Be dam, but I had to cry. An' the world wouldn't stir her out o' that till I'd lead her on

meself. As for cow nor dog nor any other thing, there's nothing would rise your heart like a horse!'

It was early in July, a hot and sunny morning, and Fanny Fitz, seated on the flawless grassplot in front of Craffroe Lodge hall-door, was engaged in washing the dogs. The mother, who had been the first victim, was morosely licking herself, shuddering effectively, and coldly ignoring her oppressor's apologies. The daughter, trembling in every limb, was standing knee-deep in the bath; one paw, placed on its rim, was ready for flight if flight became practicable; her tail, rigid with anguish, would have hummed like a violin-string if it were touched. Fanny, with her shirtsleeves rolled up to her elbows, scrubbed in the soap. A clipped fuchsia hedge, the pride of William O'Loughlin's heart, screened the little lawn and garden from the high road.

'Good-morning, Miss Fanny,' said a voice over the hedge.

Fanny Fitz raised a flushed face and wiped a fleck of Naldyre off her nose with her arm.

'I've just been looking at your mare,' went on the voice.

'Well, I hope you liked her!' said Fanny Fitz defiantly, for the voice was the voice of Rupert Gunning, and there was that in it that in this connection acted on Miss Fitzroy as a slogan.

'Well, "like" is a strong word, you know!' said Mr. Gunning, moving on and standing with his arms on the top of the white gate and meeting Fanny's glance with provoking eyes. Then, as an after thought, 'Do you think you give her enough to eat?'

'She gets a feed of oats every Sunday, and strong tea and thistles through the week,' replied Fanny Fitz in furious sarcasm.

'Yes, that's what she looks like,' said Rupert Gunning thoughtfully. 'Connolly tells me you want to send her to the show—Barnum's, I suppose, as the skeleton dude?'

'I believe you want to buy her yourself,' retorted Fanny, with a vicious dab of the soap in the daughter's eye.

'Yes, she's just about up to my weight, isn't she? By-the-bye, you haven't had her backed yet, I believe?'

'I'm going to try her to-day!' said Fanny with sudden resolve.

'Ride her yourself?' said Mr. Gunning, his eyebrows going up into the roots of his hair.

'Yes!' said Fanny, with calm as icy as a sudden burst of struggles on the part of the daughter would admit of.

Rupert Gunning hesitated; then he said, 'Well, she ought to carry a side-saddle well. Decent shoulders, and a nice long——' Perhaps he caught Fanny Fitz's eye; at all events, he left the commendation unfinished, and went on, 'I should like to look in and see the performance, if I may? I suppose you wouldn't let me try her first? No?'

He walked on.

'Puppy, *will* you stay quiet!' said Fanny Fitz very crossly. She even slapped the daughter's soap-sud muffled person, for no reason that the daughter could see.

'Begorra, miss, I dunno,' said Johnny Connolly dubiously when the suggestion that the filly should be ridden there and then was made to him a few minutes later; 'wouldn't ye wait till I put her a few turns under the cart, or maybe threw a sack o' oats on her back?'

But Fanny would brook no delay. Her saddle was in the harness-room: William O'Loughlin could help to put it on; she would try the filly at once.

Miss Fitzroy's riding was of the sort that makes up in pluck what it wants in knowledge. She stuck on by sheer force of character; that she sat fairly straight, and let a horse's head alone were gifts of Providence of which she was wholly unconscious. Riding, in her opinion, was just getting on to a saddle and staying there, and making the thing under it go as fast as possible. She had always ridden other people's horses, and had ridden them so straight, and looked so pretty, that—other people in this connection being usually men—such trifles as riding out a hard run minus both fore shoes, or watering her mount generously during a check, were endured with a forbearance not frequent in horse owners. Hunting people, however, do not generally mount their friends, no matter how attractive, on young and valuable horses. Fanny Fitz's riding had been matured on well-seasoned screws, and she sallied forth to the subjugation of the Connemara filly with a self-confidence formed on experience only of the old, and the kind, and the cunning.

The filly trembled and sidled away from the garden-seat up to which Johnny Connolly had manœuvred her. Johnny's supreme familiarity with young horses had brought him to the same point of recklessness that Fanny had arrived at from the opposite extreme, but some lingering remnant of prudence had induced him to put on the cavesson headstall, with the long rope attached to it, over the filly's bridle. The latter bore

with surprising nerve Fanny's depositing of herself in the saddle.

'I'll keep a holt. o' the rope, Miss Fanny,' said Johnny, assiduously fondling his pupil; 'it might be she'd be strange in herself for the first offer. I'll lead her on a small piece. Come on, gerr'l! Come on now!'

The pupil, thus adjured, made a hesitating movement, and Fanny settled herself down into the saddle. It was the shifting of the weight that seemed to bring home to the grey filly the true facts of the case, and with the discovery she shot straight up into the air as if she had been fired from a mortar. The rope whistled through Johnny Connolly's fingers, and the point of the filly's shoulder laid him out on the ground with the precision of a prize-fighter.

'I felt, my dear,' as Fanny Fitz remarked in a letter to a friend, 'as if I were in something between an earthquake and a bad dream and a churn. I just *clamped* my legs round the crutches, and she whirled the rest of me round her like the lash of a whip. In one of her flights she nearly went in at the hall door, and I was aware of William O'Loughlin's snow-white face somewhere behind the geraniums in the porch. I think I was clean out of the saddle then. I remember looking up at my knees, and my left foot was nearly on the ground. Then she gave another flourish, and swung me up on top again. I was hanging on to the reins hard; in fact, I think they must have pulled me back on to the saddle, as I *know* at one time I was sitting in a bunch on the stirrup! Then I heard most heart-rending yells from poor old Harriet and Rachel: "Oh, the begonias! O Fanny, get off the grass!" and then, suddenly, the filly and I were perfectly still, and the house and the trees were spinning round me, black, edged with green and yellow dazzles. Then I discovered that some one had got hold of the cavesson rope and had hauled us in, as if we were salmon; Johnny had grabbed me by the left leg, and was trying to drag me off the filly's back; William O'Loughlin had broken two pots of geraniums, and was praying loudly among the fragments; and Harriet and Rachel, who don't to this hour realise that anything unusual had happened, were reproachfully collecting the trampled remnants of the begonias.'

It was, perhaps, unworthy on Fanny Fitz's part to conceal the painful fact that it was that distinguished fisherman, Mr. Rupert Gunning, who had landed her and the Connemara filly. Freddy Alexander, however, heard the story in its

integrity, and commented on it with his usual candour. 'I don't know which was the bigger fool, you or Johnny,' he said; 'I think you ought to be jolly grateful to old Rupert!'

'Well, I'm not!' returned Fanny Fitz.

After this episode the training of the filly proceeded with more system and with entire success. Her nerves having been steadied by an hour in the lunge with a strap of oats strapped, Mazeppa-like, on to her back, she was mounted without difficulty, and was thereafter ridden daily. By the time Fanny's muscles and joints had recovered from their first attempt at rough-riding, the filly was taking her place as a reasonable member of society, and her nerves, which had been as much *en évidence* as her bones, were, like the latter, finding their proper level, and becoming clothed with tranquillity and fat. The horse show drew near, and, abetted by Mr. Alexander, Fanny Fitz filled the entry forms and drew the necessary cheque, and then fell back in her chair and gazed at the attentive dogs with fateful eyes.

'Dogs!' she said, 'if I don't sell the filly I am done for!'

The mother scratched languidly behind her ear till she yawned musically, but said nothing. The daughter, who was an enthusiast, gave a sudden bound on to Miss Fitzroy's lap, and thus it was that the cheque was countersigned with two blots and a paw mark.

None the less, the bank honoured it, being a kind bank, and not desirous to emphasise too abruptly the fact that Fanny Fitz was overdrawn.

In spite of, or rather, perhaps, in consequence of this fact, it would have been hard to find a smarter and more prosperous-looking young woman than the owner of No. 548, as she signed her name at the season-ticket turnstile and entered the wide soft aisles of the cathedral of horses at Ballsbridge. It was the first day of the show, and in token of Fanny Fitz's enthusiasm be it recorded, it was little more than 9.30 A.M. Fanny knew the show well, but hitherto only in its more worldly and social aspects. Never before had she been of the elect who have a horse 'up,' and as she hurried along, attended by Captain Spicer, at whose house she was staying, and Mr. Alexander, she felt magnificently conscious of the importance of the position.

The filly had preceded her from Craffroe by a couple of days, under the charge of Patsey Crimmeen, lent by Freddy for the occasion.

'I don't expect a prize, you know,' Fanny had said loftily to

THE FILLY'S SHOULDER LAID HIM OUT

Mr. Gunning, 'but she has improved so tremendously, every one says she ought to be an easy mare to sell.'

The sun came filtering through the high roof down on to the long rows of stalls, striking electric sparks out of the stirrup-irons and bits, and adding a fresh gloss to the polish that the grooms were giving to their charges. The judging had begun in several of the rings, and every now and then a glittering exemplification of all that horse and groom could be would come with soft thunder up the tan behind Fanny and her squires.

'We've come up through the heavy weights,' said Captain Spicer; 'the twelve-stone horses will look like rats——' He stopped.

They had arrived at the section in which figured 'No. 548. Miss F. Fitzroy's "Gamble," grey mare; 4 years, by Grey Dawn,' and opposite them was stall No. 548. In it stood the Connemara filly, or rather something that might have been her astral body. A more spectral, deplorable object could hardly be imagined. Her hind quarters had fallen in, her hips were standing out; her ribs were like the bars of a grate; her head, hung low before her, was turned so that one frightened eye scanned the passers-by, and she propped her fragile form against the partition of her stall, as though she were too weak to stand up.

To say that Fanny Fitz's face fell is to put it mildly. As she described it to Mrs. Spicer, it fell till it was about an inch wide and five miles long. Captain Spicer was speechless. Freddy alone was equal to demanding of Patsey Crimmeen what had happened to the mare.

'Begor, Masther Freddy, it's a wonder she's alive at all!' replied Patsey, who was now perceived to be looking but little better than the filly. 'She was middlin' quiet in the thrain, though she went to lep out o' the box with the first screech the engine give, but I quietened her some way, and it wasn't till we got into the sthreets here that she went mad altogether. Faith, I thought she was into the river with me three times! 'Twas hardly I got her down the quays; and the first o' thim alecthric thrams she seen! Look at me hands, sir! She had me swingin' on the rope the way ye'd swing a flail. I tell you, Masther Freddy, them was the ecstasies!'

Patsey paused and gazed with a gloomy pride into the stricken faces of his audience.

'An' as for her food,' he resumed, 'she didn't use a bit, hay,

nor oats, nor bran, bad nor good, since she left Johnny Connolly's. No, nor drink. The divil dang the bit she put in her mouth for two days, first and last. Why wouldn't she eat is it, miss? From the fright sure. She'll do nothing, only standing that way, and bushtin' out sweatin', and watching out all the time the way I wouldn't lave her. I declare to God I'm heart scalded with her!'

At this harrowing juncture came the order to No. 548 to go forth to Ring 3 to be judged, and further details were reserved. But Fanny Fitz had heard enough.

'Captain Spicer,' she said, as the party paced in deepest depression towards Ring 3, 'if I hadn't on a new veil I should cry!'

'Well, I haven't,' replied Captain Spicer; 'shall I do it for you? Upon my soul, I think the occasion demands it!'

'I just want to know one thing,' continued Miss Fitzroy. 'When does your brother-in-law arrive?'

'Not till to-night.'

'That's the only nice thing I've heard to-day,' sighed Fanny Fitz.

The judging went no better for the grey filly than might have been expected, even though she cheered up a little in the ring, and found herself equal to an invalidish but well-aimed kick at a fellow-competitor. She was ushered forth with the second batch of the rejected, her spirits sank to their former level, and Fanny's accompanied them.

Perhaps the most trying feature of the affair was the reproving sympathy of her friends, a sympathy that was apt to break down into almost irrepressible laughter at sight of the broken-down skeleton of whose prowess poor Fanny Fitz had so incautiously boasted.

'Y' know, my dear child,' said one elderly M.F.H., 'you had no business to send up an animal without the condition of a wire fence to the Dublin Show. Look at my horses! Fat as butter, every one of 'em!'

'So was mine, but it all melted away in the train,' protested Fanny Fitz in vain. Those of her friends who had only seen the mare in the catalogue sent dealers to buy her, and those who had seen her in the flesh—or what was left of it—sent amateurs; but all, dealers and the greenest of amateurs alike, entirely declined to think of buying her.

The weather was perfect; every one declared there never was a better show, and Fanny Fitz, in her newest and least-

paid-for clothes, looked brilliantly successful, and declared to Mr. Rupert Gunning that nothing made a show so interesting as having something up for it. She even encouraged him to his accustomed jibes at her Connemara speculation, and personally conducted him to stall No. 548, and made merry over its melancholy occupant in a way that scandalised Patsey, and convinced Mrs. Spicer that Fanny's pocket was even harder hit than she had feared.

On the second day, however, things looked a little more hopeful.

'She ate her grub last night and this morning middlin' well, miss,' said Patsey, 'and'—here he looked round stealthily and began to whisper—'when I had her in the ring, exercisin', this morning, there was one that called me in to the rails, like a dealer he was. "Hi! grey mare!" says he. I went in. "What's your price?" says he. "Sixty guineas, sir," says I. "Begin at the shillings and leave out the pounds!" says he. He went away then, but I think he's not done with me.'

'I'm sure the ring is our best chance, Patsey,' said Fanny, her voice thrilling with the ardour of conspiracy and of re-awakened hope. 'She doesn't look so thin when she's moving. I'll go and stand by the rails, and I'll call you in now and then just to make people look at her!'

'Sure I had Masther Freddy doing that to me yestherday,' said Patsey; but hope dies hard in an Irishman, and he saddled up with all speed.

For two long burning hours did the Connemara filly circle in Ring 3, and during all that time not once did her owner's ears hear the longed-for summons, 'Hi! grey mare!' It seemed to her that every other horse in the ring was called in to the rails, 'and she doesn't look so very thin to-day!' said Fanny indignantly to Captain Spicer, who, with Mr. Gunning, had come to take her away for lunch.

'Oh, you'll see, you'll sell her on the last day; she's getting fitter every minute,' responded Captain Spicer. 'What would you take for her?'

'I'm asking sixty,' said Fanny dubiously. 'What would *you* take for her, Mr. Gunning—on the last day, you know?'

'I'd take a ticket for her,' said Rupert Gunning, 'back to Craffroe—if you haven't a return.'

The second and third days crawled by unmarked by any incident of cheer, but on the morning of the fourth, when Fanny arrived at the stall, she found that Patsey had already gone out

to exercise. She hurried to the ring and signalled to him to come to her.

'There's a fella' afther her, miss!' said Patsey, bending very low and whispering at close and tobacco-scented range. 'He came last night to buy her; a jock he was, from the Curragh, and he said for me to be in the ring this morning. He's not come yet. He had a straw hat on him.'

Fanny sat down under the trees and waited for the jockey in the straw hat. All around were preoccupied knots of bargainers, of owners making their final arrangements, of would-be buyers hurrying from ring to ring in search of the paragon that they had now so little time to find. But the man from the Curragh came not. Fanny sent the mare in, and sat on under the trees, sunk in depression. It seemed to her she was the only person in the show who had nothing to do, who was not clinking handsful of money, or smoothing out bank-notes, or folding up cheques and interring them in fat and greasy pocket-books. She had never known this aspect of the horse show before, and—so much is in the point of view—it seemed to her sordid and detestable. Prize-winners with their coloured rosettes were swaggering about everywhere. Every horse in the show seemed to have got a prize except hers, thought Fanny. And not a man in a straw hat came near Ring 3.

She went home to lunch, dead tired. The others were going to see the polo in the park.

'I must go back and sell the mare,' said Fanny valiantly, 'or else take that ticket to Craffroe, Mr. Gunning!'

'Well, we'll come down and pick you up there after the first match, you poor, miserable thing,' said Mrs. Spicer, 'and I hope you'll find that beast of a horse dead when you get there! You look half dead yourself!'

How sick Fanny was of signing her name at that turnstile! The pen was more atrocious every time. How tired her feet were! How sick she was of the whole thing, and how incredibly big a fool she had been! She was almost too tired to know what she was doing, and she had actually walked past stall No. 548 without noticing it, when she heard Patsey's voice calling her.

'Miss Fanny! Miss Fanny! I have her sold! The mare's sold, miss! See here! I have the money in me pocket!'

The colour flooded Fanny Fitz's face. She stared at Patsey with eyes that more than ever suggested the Connemara trout-

stream with the sun playing in it; so bright were they, so changing, and so wet. So at least thought a man, much addicted to fishing, who was regarding the scene from a little way off.

'He was a dealer, miss,' went on Patsey; 'an Englishman. Sixty-three sovereigns I asked him, and he offered me fifty-five, and a man that was there said we should shplit the differ, and in the latther end he give me the sixty pounds. He wasn't very stiff at all. I'm thinking he wasn't buying for himself.'

The man who had noticed Fanny Fitz's eyes moved away unostentatiously. He had seen in them as much as he wanted; for that time at least.

SCRAPS

BY THE MARQUESS OF GRANBY

And oft a retrospect delights the mind.

THE meaning conveyed in the above line must be my apology for the subject-matter of this article; for a sportsman may perhaps be allowed to hope that the narration of experiences he has enjoyed will not be quite without interest to brother sportsmen. There are times when one's thoughts 'throw back' to exceptional days, days to be remembered, not so much because of the amount of game killed or fish caught, but by reason of some unexpected result being suddenly obtained; some wonderful and wholly unhoped for shot made; some strange or peculiarly fine specimen of bird, beast or fish secured; some chance phrase used by keeper or beater which remains permanently in one's mind; or some humorous incident which may have happened.

I wonder whether things—sporting things I mean—remain much as they were in dear old Scotland five-and-twenty years ago, or whether trains, tourists, drainage and similar necessary horrors have diminished sport for rod and gun alike? It seems but the other day, though it is nearly a quarter of a century back, that I was one of those lucky enough to find myself included in a party of three guns, whose spoils were reckoned up thus: 3 pheasants, 7 partridges, 6 blackgame, 8 woodcock, 7 snipe, 3 wild duck, 4 hares, 4 rabbits, 4 teal, 1 rail; total, 47 head.

On another day, on an adjoining beat, the bag consisted of

27 pheasants, 6 partridges, 11 grouse, 20 blackgame, 11 woodcock, 34 hares, 7 rabbits, 2 capercailzie, 2 woodpigeons ; total, 120 head ; 5 guns.

Results similar to these were constantly being achieved in those days in that beautiful sporting part of Scotland. Numerically the totals were not remarkable ; intrinsically their merits were great. Therefore over even such a gulf of time, days like these—and there were many of them—days passed in a glorious country, in a delicious climate, and with the most kindly, witty and considerate of hosts, abide with one as evergreen and lasting remembrances.

Mention of the word 'capercailzie' reminds me of the effect the first sight of this species of bird had on a friend of mine who was shooting with me on a heavily wooded hill in Scotland.

He was posted 'forward' by himself in a small glen, on either side of which the trees grew close down to the edges, so that whatever shots he might get would have to be very quick and close ones. There was but little to shoot at, and a long time to wait for what there was. In the result he grew somewhat oblivious to his surroundings. At length, however, he was aroused to consciousness by the shadow of a vast form, equal in size, as he thought at the time, to that of the roc. Panicstricken he discharged both barrels ineffectually into the air, and when the walking guns came up, owned that he was caught napping and confessed that he had been horribly frightened !

By the way, I have seen an old cock capercailzie, which was only just wounded in the point of the wing, regularly 'go for' the laddie who went to pick him up, and fairly defeat him till further help arrived.

But, leaving Scotland for a moment, would not a day's shooting in England such as the following—in a locality only three and a half hours from London—appeal to the hearts of most sportsmen ? The record reads thus : October 10, 1889—9 pheasants, 2 partridges, 50 grouse, 17 blackcock (no greyhens), 1 snipe—3 guns. And to put a crown on the whole, as the game was being laid out in front of the Lodge, a telegraph boy arrived bearing a telegram containing the information that one of the guns had backed the winner of the Cesarewitch at 33 to 1 ! Needless to say that contentment and joy reigned supreme.

What queer but admirably descriptive phrases at times drop from the lips of keepers and beaters !

I once asked a head-keeper, who is somewhat renowned for his powers of phraseology and kindly sarcasm, whether he had seen a shot fired which I considered a particularly dangerous one, and, if so, whether he did not consider it one of a most risky nature. His reply was, 'Yes, my Lord, I saw it; it was quite an *unwarrantable* shot.' A neater description could not be given.

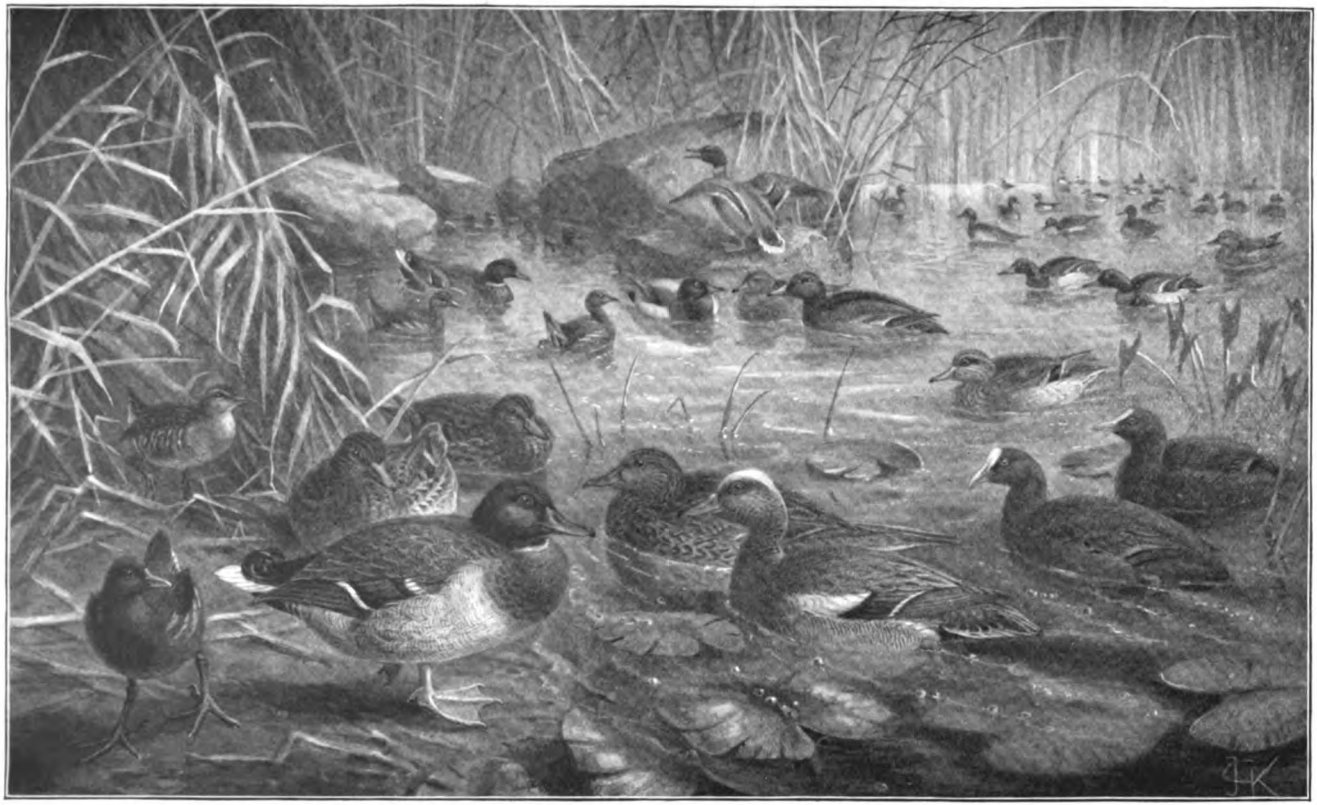
The same keeper's remark to a youngster who thought to show his knowledge when picking out the young birds from the old at the finish of a day's partridge-shooting has always amused me. The lad had been slightly officious in attempting to help the keepers in this somewhat difficult task, and at length held up a bird, saying, 'This is a young one, Mr. S.' The keeper examined it for a second and answered, 'It was *once*, my lad.' Gentle rebuke could not be better administered.

It is remarkable also how even yet there linger in some of the more out-of-the-way corners of England words which date back for many centuries. A few years ago, when tenant of a place only fifty miles from London, but which, owing to its being a considerable distance from a station, was situated in a country full of old-world ideas and reminiscences, I came across an expression which indeed carried one's thoughts back to the days of Knight and Squire, Noble and Villein. It happened thus. I was 'walking' partridges one day during the first week of September, when I entered a field just as the labourers were starting homewards with the last load of corn. (The season had been rather a late one, and the harvest had not been finished before partridge-shooting had begun.)

It chanced that this was the first season I had shot there, and as soon as I approached the group of harvesters and the homeward-bound cart, the foreman labourer came to meet me, saying 'they were glad to see me, and as it was the first time we had met, and the last load of the harvest which they were carrying, would I for both reasons give the men *largesse* to celebrate the double event?'

At first I did not feel certain what this implied exactly, when the keeper explained that 'largesse' meant much the same in 1891 as it did in 1391, and in this particular instance a donation to enable the men to drink my good health and good luck to a successful carrying. A curious survival to discover on the march of Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire!

Again, I remember once being greatly astonished at an expression used by a Highland keeper. We were shooting a wild tract of half-moor, half-bog land in Perthshire, and two or



MYRIADS OF WILD FOWL OF ALL DESCRIPTIONS

three guns were sent forward to get a few shots at any duck, snipe, grouse, or other sort of game which might be driven over them. There being no butts or anything of such a formal nature in those parts, we had to take advantage of any inequalities in the ground, large boulders, clumps of heather, or other protection, behind which to hide. Being very long, and therefore conspicuous, when I came near the spot where I was to be posted I could not at first determine how I could best efface myself, when Conacher, the keeper, who was with me, said, 'Eh mon, here's a fine *cache* for you.' He had discovered a convenient lair for me behind some straggly whins, and thus described it. Even allowing for the well-known old-time connection between Scotland and France there was nevertheless a quaint flavour about the word.

Only a few days ago a friend of mine was lamenting the steady disappearance of the Somersetshire dialect under the gradual and increasing influence of School Board teaching. He said that not only were local expressions fast vanishing, but that the very tone of speech was losing its attractive West Country individuality, and was becoming fast levelled up, or down, whichever you please, to any ordinary regulation kind of standard.

No doubt that the old order should change in this respect is, speaking broadly, for the general good and convenience ; but it is impossible not to regret greatly the gradual disappearance of such characteristics amongst the people of the counties of England.

By the way, will any one tell me why a rabbit in certain parts of Wiltshire is always called by the beaters 'Jimmy'? Who was the original who has multiplied so exceedingly, and has handed his name down to so numerous a progeny? I never came across this appellation applied to a bunny anywhere else except in the neighbourhood of Longleat.

In point of attractiveness, partly because of its extreme rarity, and partly because of its intrinsic sporting merits, a coot drive such as that in which it has sometimes been my privilege to take part ranks high amongst my shooting experiences and reminiscences.

Picture to yourself a grey day in December, with a few gleams of sun breaking at times through the clouds that occasionally lit up the long stretch of the 'Fleet,' and the waters of Lyme Bay on the other side of that marvel, the Chesil Bank. That is in itself a setting for a shooting picture which

appeals strongly, to me at least. Then fancy yourself embarked in one of the boats which, starting from a point on the Fleet a mile and a half or so from where that strange piece of water ends, slowly moves towards the place where a couple of barrels, half submerged, command the water-pass over which the coots ought to fly.

Behind these sunken tubs the Fleet opens out into a considerable semicircular expanse of water reaching for, possibly, half a mile, surrounded by a dense deep fringe of reeds, rushes, and aquatic vegetation, the home and shelter of myriads of wild fowl of all descriptions.

To this sanctuary the flight of the coots is usually directed. As, however, you are in one of the advancing boats, and are not on this occasion a semi-submerged gunner, you can, at any rate at first, notice only your immediate surroundings; and when one takes into consideration how humdrum and conventional are these surroundings in an ordinary day's shooting in England, I think you will agree with me that your present position possesses the valuable attributes of novelty and rarity. For, instead of the broad ride in a cover, the rough hedge behind which you are posted to shoot (or shoot at) the driven partridge, or the well-farmed expanse of turnip and stubble field, you here find yourself in a boat which has possibly some small motion imparted to it by the tiny wavelets of the Fleet; on your left you have the sea breaking on the Chesil Beach, though that sea you cannot view owing to the height of the wonderful pebble ridge, while on your right stretches up range after range of rough grass hill, interspersed with whin bushes and stunted tree growths.

Moreover, what are those objects which are paddling, drifting, a quarter of a mile and more ahead of you? Are they not wild ducks of different sorts, and multitudes of the grey coot? Indeed they are, and very shortly they will be on the move, scared into flight by the advancing flotilla. See, too, what are coming back towards the boats! Surging through the air with whistling wings come three or four wild swans; but they are sacred here, so hold your hand and do not shoot.

Does not all this stir your sporting enthusiasm thoroughly? Is it not unlike anything else in the way of shooting that you have ever come across? I am sure you will agree with me in this, and being thus agreed we must now make ready for the general engagement which is so imminent.

Already have some of the coots, disturbed by the steadily

MULTITUDES OF GREY COOT

though slowly advancing boats, begun their flight towards their hoped-for sanctuary in the reed-encircled expanse of water where the Fleet ends. But in so doing they have to pass over the guns concealed in the before-mentioned tubs, and these at once take heavy toll of the unsuspecting birds. In consequence many of them—the coots, I mean—whirl off right and left, some seeking safety by going seawards, some swinging over the hill edges on the landward side, while many, by turning right back, pass within shot of those gunners who are in the boats. And now comes your turn. Do not imagine you will find the coots as easy shots as one inexperienced in this sport would imagine. Many of them fly really high and fast, especially if helped by a breeze, and the unaccustomed position in which the sportsman finds himself tends very considerably indeed to diminish the accuracy of his aim. For though it may be comparatively slight, the motion imparted to a boat by the ordinary 'feel' of the waves, and the soft dip of the oars, however skilful the boatman may be, lends a distinct tinge of uncertainty to any one's shooting powers. So brace your feet firmly against the boat-boards, 'give' as much as possible to the gentle movement of your craft, and do the best you can.

But do not, gentle reader, be alarmed! I am not going to attempt further 'extension' of this recollection of a coot drive by the sea. It will suffice to say that by the time the boats have reached the tub-ensconced guns many a bird has been accounted for. And not only coot, but a few wild duck and teal. The total may reach three or four hundred head, or even more. And if so, who need grumble? For those who live in the villages on this coast thoroughly appreciate the coot as an article of food, and so at the end of the day an equal distribution is made of the spoil amongst the beaters, nearly all of whom are fishermen. It is needless, therefore, to add that the progress of the coot drive is followed with great and intelligent interest by these men, who are about the cleverest and best beaters I have ever come across, and have sound reasons for hoping that the somewhat complicated and uncertain drive may prove a big success.

And thus ends the day's sport: a day which began with some 'high' pheasants and many a rabbit killed in charming little woods clothing the sides of the narrow combes which hereabouts run down to the sea, and which finished with the afternoon's coot drive which I have just attempted to describe.

To me it seems good to call from out the limbo of the past

such a day, with all its surroundings of glorious sea and land views and soft weather. For winter in England does not always mean cold, frost and fog, and at a time such as the present, with death, misery and suffering so prominently before us all, I try to attain such a contemplative frame of mind that I can—

to the sessions of sweet silent thought
Summon up remembrance of things past.

NOTES ON A LATTER-DAY HUNTING TRIP IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS[1]

BY F. C. SELOUS

ON the following day, October 8, I went out with Jinks. We started on horseback and rode some miles along a blazed trail —that is, along a path which, though otherwise invisible, was marked here and there by trees from which a piece of bark had been chopped—leading up the valley of one of the many tributaries of the main stream on which we were camped. Presently we reached a point beyond which the ground was very much cut up by steep-sided gullies, and here we left our horses (after having hobbled them and removed their saddles) and proceeded on foot. Having climbed to the top of a little ridge we halted to take a look round. Jinks, who had the glasses, had just said, 'I think I can see sheep,' when I, too, saw the white rump of an animal, as it moved amongst some small scattered pine trees about 400 yards away to our left. Soon I made out two more, one of which was lying down, but they were too far off to be seen very distinctly with the naked eye. Jinks, however, now confidently pronounced them to be sheep, but said he feared they were either ewes or young rams. Taking the glasses from him I was obliged to come to the same conclusion, but there was still a chance that there might be a ram somewhere near the animals we could see, hidden from view by a tree or some inequality in the ground, and we were just preparing to commence a nearer approach when for some reason or other the sheep began to come nearer to us. Something appeared

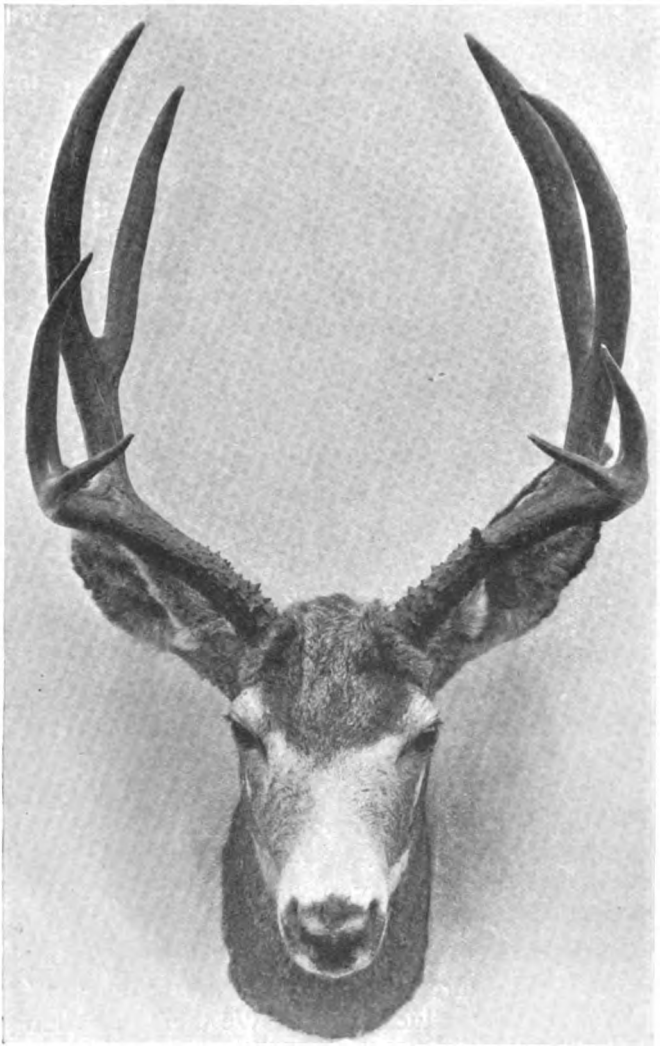
[1] Copyright 1900, by F. C. Selous.

to have startled them, though I do not know what it could have been unless it was the sight of a lynx or a puma. We soon saw that there were five sheep altogether, and that they were all ewes. The slope just above us was very steep and rocky and scantily covered with pine trees for a distance of perhaps 300 feet, but above this there rose a sheer wall of rock, and it was just along the base of this that the wild sheep came. They advanced in single file, sometimes trotting, sometimes walking, but with many halts, and as they passed just above us, at a distance of about a hundred yards, they gave me some excellent chances, of which, however, as they were only ewes, I did not avail myself. My companion had been rather anxious for me to take a shot, urging, in answer to my objections, that the meat of the last deer I had killed was not yet finished and that I did not want the head of a sheep ewe, that in his opinion sheep meat was better than deer meat, and would be much appreciated in camp.

In a country where game is so scarce that one only gets an occasional chance of a shot at anything at all, more self-restraint is sometimes needed, in order not to kill an animal unnecessarily, than in those parts of Africa where wild animals still abound, for in the latter country one can always get a fair amount of legitimate shooting, as one sees animals with heads worth preserving almost every day, and *must* kill a good deal of game to support one's native following, whilst in a country where one may hunt for days together without seeing a living animal, there is often a strong temptation to have a shot at the first beast that presents itself, even though it hasn't got a head worth keeping and there is still meat in camp, for a great deal of hunting with very little shooting is somewhat dull work.

After the sheep had passed out of view, Jinks and I held on our way up the valley we were in, and had almost reached the head of the creek by which it was intersected when we came on the very fresh track of a deer, which my companion at once pronounced to be an animal of unusual size. 'You'd get some horns, I guess, if you could get him,' he remarked, and we at once set about tracking him up. There was no snow on the ground here, and we very soon lost the tracks completely. Jinks then went off to the right to try and pick them up again, whilst I held on in the direction in which it seemed to me that the deer had been travelling. It was not long before I again found the tracks, and a moment later I saw the horns of the deer itself appear just above some wild currant bushes. I was now in mortal fear lest Jinks should come towards me

or call out and so disturb the deer, but fortune favoured me, and on creeping to a rock and looking over it I got a clear view of a splendid buck mule deer. He was standing in a



HEAD OF MULE DEER, SHOT OCTOBER 8, 1897

favourable position for a shot, less than a hundred yards away from me, so I lost no time in firing. At the report of my rifle he went off in a series of leaps for about thirty yards through the wild currant bushes, then stopped, and just as I

was going to fire again, rolled over. When I came up to him he was quite dead, my bullet having struck him rather low behind the shoulder, torn a large hole through the side of his heart, and passed out through the lower part of the neck. When Jinks came up he pronounced him to be a very large mule deer. He was astonishingly fat, and carried a fine massive head, his horns growing much straighter up than is usual with mule deer. After having cleaned the carcase, and lifted it on to a rock, we started for camp, carrying the head and neck skin with us.

On the following day we returned with the scale, and after cutting up the deer I carefully weighed each section, with the following result:

Forequarters	(weighed)	88 lb.
Neck	,,	22 ,,
Hindquarters	,,	110 ,,
Head, with neck-skin and forelegs .	,,	22 ,,
Total	,,	242 ,,

(Or 17 st. 4 lb.)

During the next two days, October 10 and 11, I saw nothing but one doe mule deer all by herself.

On October 12 we all remained in camp, as it rained hard all day, turning to sleet towards dusk. On the following day it sleeted and snowed all day, but being tired of inactivity I went out with Graham. We found the mountain about 1000 feet above our camp covered with snow about two feet deep, and as the snow kept falling the depth rapidly increased. We came on the tracks of five or six mule deer, that seemed to be revelling in the new fallen snow, as they appeared to have been playing about in it, and kept constantly climbing higher and higher up the mountain side. At last we sighted them, as having seen or winded us they went off across an open snow slope in a series of leaps. One looked much larger than the others, and though I could only see it indistinctly through the driving snow, I made sure it was a buck, and firing at it broke one of its forelegs with a lucky shot. We then had a long and very tiring chase after it, and at last I hit it again near the top of the mountain just over our camp. Graham's dog Bang was with us on this occasion, and we now set him after it. He ran it down into the valley close to our camp, and W. M. hearing the dog barking ran out and killed the wounded animal, which was carried into camp whole. This carcase we froze, and none of the meat was subsequently wasted.

On the morning of October 14 we found the snow about a foot deep round our camp. I went out again with Graham, but as it kept on snowing all day without a break, we returned early in the afternoon. The snow was now very deep on the hills above camp, and walking through it a very tiring operation.

It continued snowing all night and the next morning, but cleared up by 11 o'clock. Our tents were now half buried in snow and our meat was frozen solid, so that steaks had to be sawn out of a block that had all the appearance of a piece of hard wood; a charmingly novel experience for my wife and myself, who had never before travelled in a cold country. With a small sheet-iron stove we were, however, able to keep our tent quite warm and comfortable, and though it soon cooled off at night, after the fire had gone out, to the temperature of the outside air, we were always quite comfortable under a couple of Jaeger blankets. Having no thermometer with us we could not tell exactly how cold it was, but I don't think it was ever much below zero, which is a very enjoyable temperature in the beautiful dry air of the Rocky Mountains, as long as there is no wind.

JUST AFTER THE FIRST HEAVY SNOW, OCTOBER 1897

As soon as it had cleared I went out alone, and made my way to near the head of the creek where I had shot my second buck deer. I saw no game and no tracks, but found the snow in places so deep that the labour of getting through it was sometimes most exhausting.

Just at the mouth of this creek we had a few days previously

discovered a grave, at the head of which a piece of board was still standing with the dead man's name rudely burnt into it. Hard by was a fire-place and rough stone chimney built against a rock, which had evidently formed one side of the shelter in which the occupant of the grave had passed a winter. We heard the story connected with this lonely grave some time afterwards. The dead man had been the chief of a band of horse-thieves that had been broken up and dispersed by the police, and being badly wanted he had fled from the abodes of men and made his way with one companion up the South Fork of Stinking Water in the dead of winter. When they thought themselves safe from all pursuit the outlaws built a rough shelter from the weather against the rock where we had found the remains of the hearth and chimney. The rude cabin completed, the less notorious thief left his companion, promising to return in the early spring, by which time it was thought the vigilance of the authorities would have been somewhat relaxed. At the appointed time the man returned according to agreement, but not alone, for having betrayed his former comrade to the police, he was accompanied by two Sheriff's officers. There appears to have been no attempt to capture the horse-thief. The informer and his companions made a stalk on to his hiding-place, and after the latter had ambushed themselves within short range amongst a convenient cluster of pine trees, the false friend walked forward and called on his old companion by name. The latter recognising the voice and suspecting nothing, at once came out to meet him, but had not advanced many yards before he was shot dead by the ambushed officers of the law. That is the story as we heard it, but whether it is all or only partly true is more than I can say. But lonely though the outlaw's grave may be, it lies at any rate in a lovely spot, over which the glorious mountains will keep guard, and the free winds of heaven blow fresh and sweet for evermore.

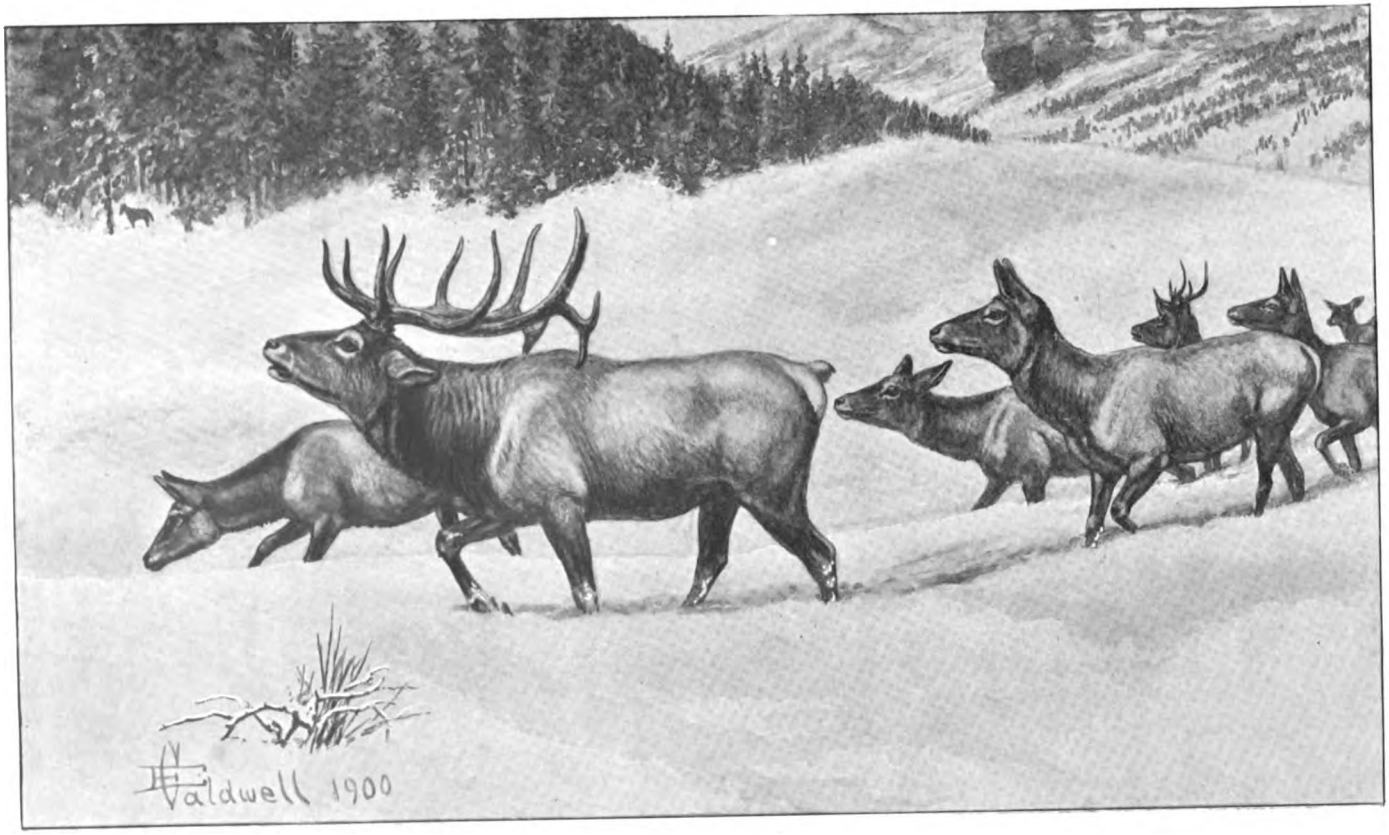
On the following day, October 16, I had a very tiring walk —eight hours continuous wading through deep snow. I tracked a buck deer for five solid hours without overtaking it, and whilst doing so came on three does, with which, of course, not being in want of meat, I did not interfere. On getting back to camp I was very pleased to find that W. M., who had had no luck at all lately, had shot a 'Wapiti Bull,' with a well-shaped head of eleven points, and measuring 46 inches along the beam.

On the following morning, Sunday, October 17, we moved

camp lower down the main creek. It was a wretched day, fine snow falling almost constantly. Knowing that we were going to camp at the mouth of a large creek known as East Fork, I rode on ahead, and after crossing the main stream, tied my horse to a tree, and hunted up the above-named tributary. I soon got fresh deer tracks, and there were so many of them that I thought there was sure to be a buck amongst them, though in the snow I could not distinguish between the tracks of bucks and does by the relative size of the footprints. Mule deer appear to feed at this time of year more on the leaves of a little shrub, which grows in patches on the hillsides, but only attains to a height of a foot or eighteen inches, than upon grass. These little bushes they evidently first scent, and then dig clear of snow. Mule deer always seemed to me to revel in snow, but when it gets really deep Graham told me they were very fond of following up a herd of wapiti in order to take advantage of the clearances made by the more powerful animals in search of food. I had followed the mule deer very cautiously for about an hour, never moving without first carefully scanning the ground in front of me, when I suddenly saw a tell-tale white rump move amongst the pines, about a hundred yards ahead. Sinking down in the snow I crept forwards to the prostrate trunk of a fallen tree, and then looked cautiously over it. I could see five deer, all does and fawns, but I knew there were others on ahead, and perhaps a buck amongst them, so I crept back again until well out of sight, and then ascended the hill to my left and came down on the deer from above. I just met

STRIKING CAMP IN THE SNOW, ROCKY MOUNTAINS, OCT. 1897

them, as they had apparently done feeding and were going up the mountain to take up a position for the day in the deep snow. I soon saw there was no buck amongst them, and as I did not care whether they saw me or not, I stood quite still between two trees, holding my rifle under my arm. One by one the unsuspecting creatures passed me in single file at a distance of not more than twenty yards. Each one in turn looked at me curiously, but without the slightest trace of alarm, and I have no doubt they took me for a tree, as there was no wind and I remained absolutely motionless. There were ten of them altogether, all does and fawns. An old doe brought up the rear, and as she passed she looked full at me, and stretching out her head, gave vent to a cry something like that of a young calf. It was evidently a call to her own fawn, for I heard an immediate answer from the forest, into which the foremost members of the herd had already disappeared. I fancy it must be rather exceptional to hear a mule deer make any kind of sound, as Graham told me that the bucks neither roar nor whistle nor call in any way during the rutting season, and he had always thought that the does were equally silent. After I had got clear of the mule deer I went on in search of wapiti, but though I found some pretty fresh tracks and followed them a good distance I did not see any of the animals themselves. On reaching camp, just as it was getting dark, I found that my wife and all the other members of the party had had a very interesting experience. They had just emerged into an open space opposite the mouth of the East Fork creek, where it had been arranged that we were to camp, when a band of wapiti appeared on the bare mountain side to their right, and not more than 400 yards away from them. They were walking along in two lines through the deep snow, and numbered seventeen altogether, fifteen cows and calves, one big bull and one smaller one. Just then my horse, which was standing tied to a tree on the other side of the stream, caught sight of his fellows, and commenced to neigh, and every time he neighed the big bull, thinking it was a challenge to himself, answered and bade defiance to all the world. Of course the wapiti soon caught sight of the cavalcade, but being a good way off and well above it, they showed no signs of alarm, but walking slowly forwards soon disappeared in the pine forest. W. M. went in pursuit, but was not fortunate enough to get a shot. He could not follow the wapiti's tracks because of the wind, and so had tried to head them off. He must have just missed



BADE DEFIANCE TO ALL THE WORLD

them, however, in the thick timber, and it was then too late to repeat the experiment. I, too, could only just have missed seeing this herd of wapiti on my way home, and must certainly have been within 200 yards of some of them, but in the dense forest we were mutually unconscious of one another's proximity.

That evening we discussed the chances of coming up with the wapiti and getting a shot at the big bull on the morrow. Graham did not think that the fact of their having seen the pack-horses would cause them to travel far, but he feared they might have winded either W. M. or myself when we were close to them, in which case his opinion was that they would travel so far during the night that it would be impossible to overtake them. We then had to decide who was to follow them. W. M., who is the most unselfish fellow in the world, insisted that I should do so, and refused to toss up about it, urging that as he had killed two wapiti and I only one, it was I who ought to take this chance, if chance there was. Finally it was decided that I should go alone—the way I love to hunt—on the tracks of the wapiti, whilst W. M. and Graham should try a gorge coming down from the mountains to our left.

I was up early the next morning, October 18, and after a good breakfast, put a bit of deer meat in my pocket and started out after the wapiti, making use of a horse to cross the river, which Graham, who accompanied me so far, then led back to camp. I soon got on the tracks of the wapiti, which presently brought me to the hillside where I had found the mule deer feeding on the previous day. Here they had evidently fed for a long time, as they had scraped a very considerable area of ground free of snow, not in one continuous stretch, but in numbers of small patches, each patch having been cleared by one animal or by the united exertions of two or three working together. I fancy they must have been feeding on this hillside —not more than three miles from our camp—for the greater part of the night. After leaving it, they had gone down to the creek—the East Fork—and after crossing it, had climbed the side of the mountain above. Fording the creek did not add to my comfort, as the water was icy cold and came above my knees. I had followed the wapiti for an hour or so, along the mountain side high above the creek, and was just rounding a shoulder, divided by a deep ravine, from another portion of the mountain, when I saw something move amongst the scattered timber below me, and the next instant made out three mule deer does, following slowly on the tracks of the wapiti, and

feeding wherever these latter animals had scraped away the snow. Then I saw what I took to be a mule deer buck, as he came from behind the does and I saw that he had horns. I only got the barest glimpse of these, however, as he immediately put his head down behind a bush to feed. Looking across the ravine, I could see trails in the snow leading round the opposite shoulder of the mountain, and took them to be the tracks of the wapiti I was following, which I judged were therefore still a good way on ahead. What I thought was a good mule deer buck was well within shot, and though I could only see a small part of him, that part was the vital portion of his body lying just at the back of the shoulder. I wanted a few more good deer heads, and so quickly determined to fire just one shot, and then go on after the wapiti ; but the moment I fired, though the thud of the bullet assured me it had found its billet, I realised the mistake I had made. The mule deer does went off in a succession of leaps, but the animal, only a portion of which I had seen feeding amongst the bushes close to them, raising its head, rushed forwards through the snow, and to my intense vexation revealed the form of a very young wapiti bull with little spike horns. Nor was this all, for I immediately saw some dark forms passing rapidly amongst the pine trees on the further side of the ravine. The whole herd of wapiti had only been about a hundred yards in front of the mule deer, in whose company the spike bull, curiously enough, had remained behind all by himself. On being disturbed by the shot, the wapiti commenced climbing straight up the mountain, through such thick-growing timber that I could only get occasional glimpses of them, and for some time I could not see anything but cows. Presently, however, I caught sight of the horns of a bull, bringing up the rear of the herd, and keeping my eyes on him saw him halt. He was then just within the edge of a rather thick patch of timber, but he soon walked out into a more open place and stood looking back into the ravine below him. He was now broadside to me, and I judged him to be between 200 and 300 yards distant. I was already sitting down in position for a shot, so putting up the second sight, and taking rather full, I fired as quickly as possible, and heard the bullet tell, as the great stag, plunging forwards, disappeared amongst the pine trees. I had hardly got another cartridge into my rifle when I saw another stag climbing upwards amongst the trees, and the glimpses I had of him made me think he carried a finer head than the one I had just wounded, but

I couldn't get a shot at him, and he soon became entirely lost to view. The unfortunate spike bull, let me here say, had only run about fifty yards before rolling over dead. I went down to look at him before taking up the spoor of the wounded bull, and found he had got the bullet right through the lungs. I felt, and still feel, the keenest regret at having slain him so needlessly through a stupid mistake. On climbing up to the place where the bull had been standing when I fired at him, I soon found spots of blood on the snow. The wounded beast had first gone off along the mountain side by himself, but always ascending, soon came round to the tracks of the rest of the herd, which he then followed straight up the mountain side, which was here very steep though thickly covered with pine trees. The snow lay quite three feet deep, but was comparatively easy to get through, as the wapiti had ploughed a path for me. I didn't like my wounded bull going straight up hill, as I thought that if he were badly wounded he would have gone down hill. However, I determined to follow him as long as I could. He was not bleeding very freely, but every speck showed up very plainly on the pure white snow, and as wherever he dipped his nose in it he left a bloody patch, I felt sure my bullet had touched his lungs. I had got close to the top of the ridge we were on, when hearing something above me, I halted, and the next moment saw a mule deer doe, coming down towards me through the pine trees. She was closely followed by another doe with a fawn, and behind them came a fine buck. These mule deer must have been lying on the top of the ridge where the snow was at least three feet deep, and had no doubt been disturbed by the wapiti. I was annoyed at having shot the spike bull, and thought that possibly I should lose the wounded animal I was following, and seeing the mule deer buck so near me, determined to have his head at all events, so killed him with a bullet through his lungs. On being struck he came plunging down the hill through the deep snow, and fell dead within ten yards of where I stood. I cleaned him hurriedly, and then laying him out belly downwards on the snow, again took up the tracks of the wapiti bull. He had followed the herd to the top of the ridge, but whilst they had then turned to the left towards a still higher shoulder he had gone down the other side by himself. He did not descend very far, however, but soon turned and held along the face of the mountain. The snow was here very deep, and I only got through it very slowly and with great labour. Presently the

BEHIND THEM CAME A FINE BUCK

wounded bull turned sharp down the hill again, but only for a very short distance, when he again turned back along the face of it, taking a line just parallel to his tracks a little higher up. I soon found out what this move meant. After going back for about fifty yards parallel to his trail, he had lain down in the snow. Here there was a good deal of blood, but on examining the tracks beyond, I found that he had left this bed quite slowly at a walk. I soon, however, came to a second bed, from which he had sprung with a plunge, and then rushed down the hill through the snow. He had, of course, either seen or scented or heard me, as I passed along the hillside above him on his trail, and had taken up such a position as to render it quite impossible for anything to come on his trail without his being cognisant of it. I have known African elephants in districts where they have been much persecuted, execute this same manœuvre, and I find it impossible to account for such facts except on the assumption that animals possess reasoning faculties which they are capable of exerting under pressure of circumstances. According to old writers on American hunting, all wapiti were once very stupid animals. Now *some* wapiti, at least, have become as cunning and as capable of reasoning out the best way of taking care of themselves as a South African elephant.

After a few plunges down hill, the wounded wapiti had again turned upwards. The snow was so deep that it was not only very exhausting work getting through it, but impossible to do this at all except at a very slow pace. Presently the tracks led me again to the top of the ridge, where the wounded bull had ceased to follow the rest of the herd, but from here he had mounted to a still higher shoulder of the mountain, and late in the afternoon he led me back to the herd once more either by accident or design. I first saw the heads and ears of three hinds. They were lying down in such deep snow, that their bodies were quite invisible, only their heads and necks showing above the surface. As I caught sight of them they, too, saw me, and getting up, trotted down hill through the snow. At this moment I heard a sort of grunt below me, and then saw a few more wapiti hinds coming up towards me through the pine trees. Then I saw the head and horns of a stag appear, but he was going along the hillside, or rather climbing it obliquely. He was within shot, but I could only see his head and horns, as his body was hidden by a swell in the ground. I now made the most frantic efforts to get nearer to him. I think he must

have seen me, but the snow was so deep that he could only move slowly through it, whilst I could scarcely move at all, in spite of the most frantic exertions, which, as I was probably 10,000 feet above sea level, made me pant so much that I thought I should not be able to hit anything smaller than an elephant. I managed, however, to gain the crest of a piece of rising ground from which I had only been a few yards distant, and could then see about half the body of the wapiti stag, and though fearfully unsteady managed to put a bullet into him. Just as I fired I saw a second and smaller wapiti stag coming up the hill behind the first. A glance assured me it was the animal I had wounded in the morning and followed all day, as he held his mouth open, and halted with his head held down just as I saw him. However, I did not now pay much attention to him, as I wanted to first secure the larger animal in front. My first shot, however, had pierced his lungs, and he came to a halt very soon after he was hit. I did not know at the time whether I had hit him or not, for although I could see that he had halted, I could only see his horns, as immediately after I got my shot at him his body again became hidden by the contour of the ground. I now renewed my efforts to get a few yards nearer to him through the snow, but when I got a view of him I did not fire, as I saw he was done for. Suddenly his legs gave way beneath him, and he came rolling down the steep mountain side close past me, and would most certainly never have stopped till he had reached the bed of the East Fork some 1500 feet below, had he not presently been brought up by a big pine tree. Curiously enough he slid to within ten yards of the stag which had been first wounded. This latter was now so weakened by loss of blood, that he could move no further through the deep snow, and he now lay down. When I moved down towards him he tried to get on his feet, but was unable to do so, and I then came close to him, and killed him with a bullet through the lungs. After having been first wounded he had fled before me, until his strength had altogether failed, and his legs had refused to carry him any further. To have killed two wapiti stags within ten yards of one another was certainly a very successful termination to a long day's hunt, and was one of those strokes of luck which atone for many blank days. The stags were both twelve pointers ; the larger animal a fairly good one, the smaller not much to boast of.

(*To be continued.*)

MOTOR CAR FOR HIRE

BY JESSIE POPE

I SUPPOSE Mr. Morgan, our saddler, was an enterprising man. Certainly in the matter of bicycle repairs he showed an independent spirit, and I don't forget the day he injected a whole tube of solution into my back tyre to cure a pin-hole puncture. It was a method of his own, he explained, and he asked me to keep it to myself, as he thought there was money in it. I remember how my heart warmed with gratitude, for that puncture had bothered me for weeks. The next morning we all went to the seaside, the next evening I paid 10*s.* 6*d.* for a new tube (seaside prices), and the morning after we came back my cousin Geoffrey and I bore down upon the saddler breathing slaughter. We were prepared to make short work of him, for we were both out of temper. The country was tame and dull, the sea a hundred miles behind, and, in the same way one feels homesick at school, we now felt seasick at home, only more so. Geoffrey and I don't often quarrel, but we were pretty near it that morning when he made the contemptuous remark:

'I suppose it's natural he should play tricks on a girl's machine. He'd know better if he had a man to deal with.'

And I retorted:

'So *you're* not safe yet either.'

But at that moment we turned the corner, and there before the saddler's door stood an elegant little motor car with a placard bearing the announcement:

MOTOR CAR
FOR
HIRE

hanging over the splashboard. The anger died in our hearts, and life was rosy again. Mr. Morgan suddenly became a person to be propitiated, and we hastened to greet him with a familiarity that was nearly affection. He was a little Welshman, always fussily anxious to show off his intelligence. His eyes and teeth were unusually prominent, and the latter shone through his light beard in a way that always fascinated me. He grew positively fulsome over his new purchase, he and Geoffrey took out the seat and disclosed some weird-looking machinery beneath, and discussed motors in general and this one in particular with a technical knowledge that made me humble. They arranged a run for that very afternoon. The motor car held two. I was a girl, so I was left behind.

I may as well confess at once that, though I always felt that motor cars were fascinating things, I know very little about them. How they go and what the things inside are called I haven't the haziest notion, though I'd certainly heard that they like their own way and generally finish up with a burst. Anyhow I was relieved to see Geoffrey walking up the garden after his ride.

'Well, does it *go?*' I remarked.

'*Go!*' exclaimed Geoffrey, 'it would go like a bird if he'd only let it; but he was green with terror the whole time, and kept saying he must remember his wife and family!'

The end of that week our authorities at home went out for the day. We waved our hands affectionately at the departing carriage, and then walked down to the saddler's. *Walked*, do I say? You can scarcely call it walking when your feet never feel the ground. I was simply trembling with excitement, and I could tell by the gleam in Geoffrey's eye that even he felt the fever of expectancy.

There she stood, a gaudy beauty in black and yellow, and our hearts leaped at the sight of her.

But Mr. Morgan began to hesitate.

'I really hardly like—I'm sure I don't know—I scarcely feel I ought—' he stopped, for Geoffrey was looking at him. Geoffrey stands 5 ft. 10½ in., and he's a sportsman. I'm proud of him, and I rather think that next year Oxford will be too. So when the saddler finally blurted out, 'I'm half afraid of letting you have it,' Geoffrey stared at him haughtily.

'What does that placard say?' asked Geoffrey.

'They're such ticklish things to manage, sir,' replied the saddler, with an unhappy, helpless look on his face.

'You mean you don't think I can drive it?' said Geoffrey quietly.

The saddler squirmed and hauled down his colours.

'Oh no, sir! Oh no! Mr. Geoffrey. You've ten times the nerve I have. Oh no, sir! I didn't mean that at all.'

'Oh! my mistake,' replied Geoffrey. 'Get in the other side, Kit, and keep your dress away from that little handle under the seat.'

The children were on their way to the National School and gathered round us in a little crowd. Buzzard's clerk was passing, and two of Morton's millinery hands, and they also stopped and looked on. Geoffrey got in beside me and began to wind a little handle at his side. A small groaning sound came from under the seat, followed by a deep internal note which began low down and increased in volume and ferocity as it went up the scale. The children were startled—naturally—I'm quite sure *I* was, they fell back and stumbled over each other, and one began to cry. The milliners shrank towards Buzzard's clerk, and I, expecting instant annihilation, sat trying to look as if I were used to it. Then, when we seemed to have arrived at the bursting-point, Geoffrey pulled a lever and we sprang forward with a bound.

To my unsophisticated ears the noise we made going up that High Street was simply terrific; but though half ashamed of the disturbance, I felt such a silly desire to giggle that I found it extremely difficult to preserve a *blasé* demeanour. Geoffrey was thoroughly enjoying it, and the more heads that popped from the little gabled windows the more he liked it. I fancy, however, he found straightforward driving easier than turning corners. The first we took so sharply that I'm sure we skidded round most of the way on two wheels, and the next—well, the wonder to me is that we didn't all three of us make our appearance in the 'Bull' bar parlour.

But when we got out on the Danderby Road we found a fair level stretch before us. My heart slipped back into its right place again, and Geoffrey's jaw relaxed. My word! but it was glorious now; we buzzed along at a grand pace, no one was about, and Geoffrey suddenly relieved his feelings by a whoop and a shout. I wanted to, but I knew Geoffrey would think it unladylike (he's very particular), so I had to content myself with singing 'Oh, listen to the Band,' at the top of my voice.

There weren't half enough spectators to satisfy our pride,

THE 'CROCODILE' WAS JUST CROSSING THE ROAD

but we gave a double note to everybody we did see, and it was grand to watch their faces as they turned round with a start. First came a look of alarm, followed by pleased surprise, then deep interest, changing as we flashed by—to—deadly nausea. We couldn't smell it ourselves—much.

Before we had gone much farther a welcome sight gladdened our eyes. Sedately parading along the road in front what should we see but the Howard House 'crocodile' itself—twenty couples strong. There is a deadly feud between our people and the Howard House people, and I don't know any of the girls, but despise them all, and I felt that the present opportunity was almost providential. The 'crocodile' was just crossing the road when our strident warning divided it clean in half. How the girls scurried to each side of the road in disorder, how supercilious I felt as we hurtled by with short leaps and bounds and fierce snorting noises!

We reached Hound's Hill in no time, and when we had climbed the first little gradient Geoffrey stopped and got down to put more petrol stuff, or something, into the works, and being on the incline we began to move backward until he jammed on the brake. He took a long time fiddling about first with one thing and then another, till at last growing sounds behind made me look over my shoulder, and there, close upon us, was the 'crocodile' again, re-formed in marching order, and chattering and laughing all along the line.

'Hurry up, Geoff,' I cried, 'here they are! Let's show them the way again!' He ascended in a leisurely manner, and once more began to turn the little handle at the side. Again came the deep internal note, increasing in violence as it ascended the scale, and again, when the whole thing seemed at bursting-point, Geoffrey pulled back the lever. But this time nothing happened—we remained stationary—all the while filling the air with strange and uncanny noises.

Geoffrey was evidently puzzled: he began to pull other handles and taps and things, while the 'crocodile' drew nearer and nearer, and I began to feel terribly embarrassed. In vain Geoffrey pulled and poked: the case was clear to everybody present—the ridiculous thing would not go. There we had to sit, and while it gave vent to its inward tumult and sickened us with its fumes, those giggling girls drew alongside. Couple by couple they paraded past—twenty, did I say?—it seemed more like two hundred, each staring with unfeigned merriment, and I heard one voice say slowly and distinctly:

'If one had a carrot, now!'

I ground my teeth, and glancing under my hat brim I saw that even Geoffrey was much redder than usual.

It was not till the school had turned down Ettingham Lane that light broke in upon him; then, with an exclamation of mingled relief and disgust he pulled a lever—and we leaped forward with a jerk that nearly shot me out altogether.

'Forgot to take the brake off!' he explained; and I was so thankful to be going once more that I spared all reproach, but I will say this for that motor car—when it did go, it *did* go.

Of course certain little things happened to add to the interest of the run, as, for instance, when Geoffrey seeing half a mile of loose granite ahead suddenly decided to turn back, and took such a generous curve that we not only collided with the bank but got up on the path with both our front wheels. As Geoffrey said, the steering bar was stiff, and I could see the difficulty he had in turning it. Happily there's not much traffic about our roads—if we had been in Piccadilly we might have come to grief.

The last mile into the town is a mile to be looked forward to all through a bicycle ride—a nice gentle down grade all the way. We breasted the other side slowly and noisily, then suddenly, as she felt the incline, the tumult ceased and we slipped along rapidly in delicious silence.

'Where's the noise gone to?' I exclaimed.

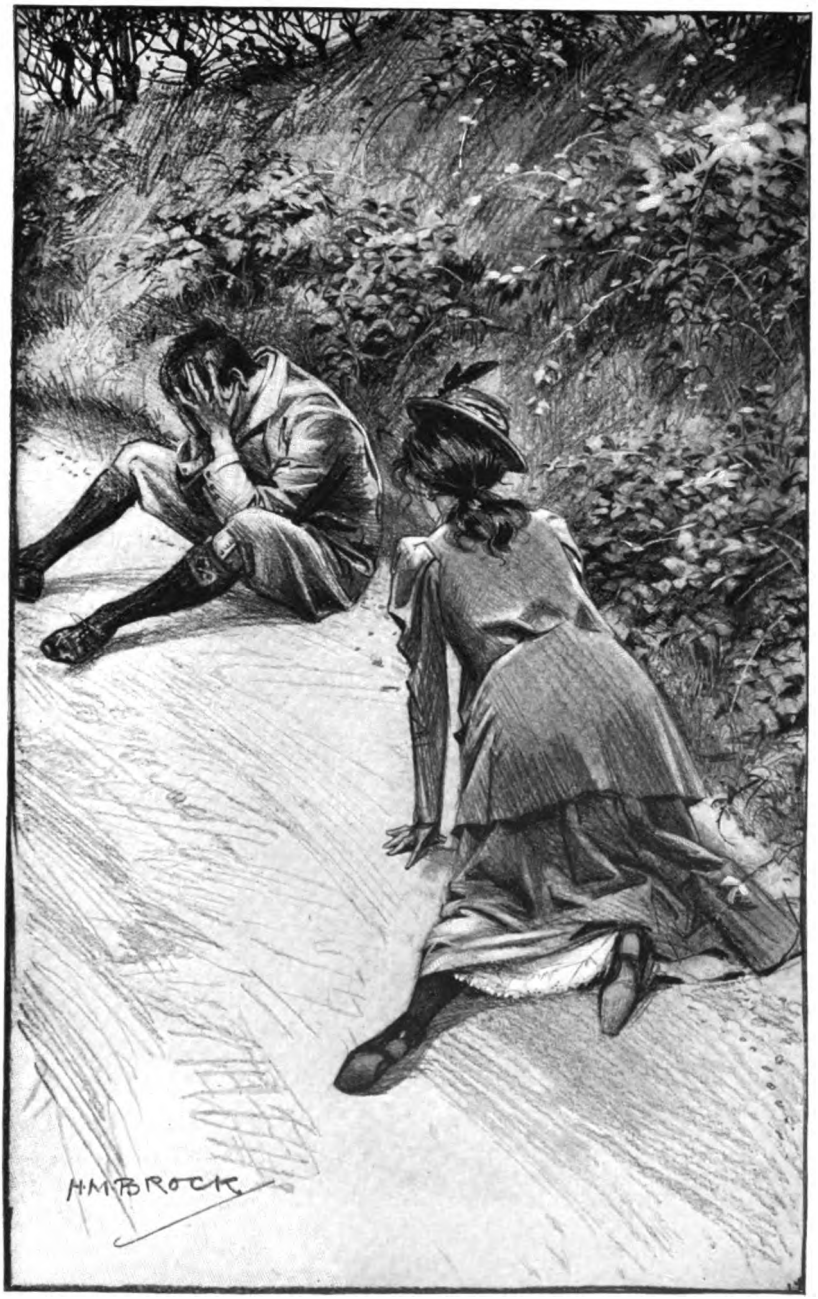
'We're coasting!' replied Geoffrey proudly: 'how do you like it?'

It was perfect. Our delight knew no bounds, and unfortunately I made an ecstatic remark about it being fit for the gods, and then—of course—Geoffrey began quoting Greek. There are only two things I object to in Geoffrey's character: one is the tantalising habit of saying pithy things in a language I can't understand (and don't want to); and the other is that still more trying weakness of riding *my* bicycle into the town in muddy weather. On the present occasion I pinched him. I always do, and I think he's improving—my pinches are small and penetrating. He turned upon me with a cry of rage and anguish, but he knew he was wrong, for he said, half laughing:

'Well, it's your fault—you suggested it. The gods always rode in cars, and I don't blame them.'

'I say, Geoffrey,' I observed, for a sudden thought alarmed me—'I wonder if the gods love us?'

That made Geoffrey thoughtful too.



THE FIRST THING I SAW WAS GEOFFREY SITTING DOWN HOLDING HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS

'Scott! I hope not!' he replied, and we were silent.

But the very next minute it really seemed as if they were going to show their affection. We had reached that part of the road called 'the cutting,' where the down grade is very gentle and the banks sheer and unsympathetic. Geoffrey had started the thing going again, and it's possible he may have made a mistake and pulled the wrong handle—and considering there were about twenty of them, and all wanted pulling, it's not very wonderful if he did. Anyhow we were going pretty fast when the thing swerved right to one side. Geoffrey wrenched round the steering-handle to pull us back, with the result that we went hard across into the opposite bank.

I *knew* that something was going to happen, and it did! Before I had time to feel frightened there was a thud and a recoil, and the next minute I was rolling down the bank, catching at the thorns and brambles on my way. I reached the road on my hands and knees (particularly *one* knee), and the first thing I saw was Geoffrey sitting down holding his head in his hands.

'Geoffrey—*darling!*' I cried—and really under the circumstances I think I was justified in using such an expression, for blood was trickling through his fingers, and when I took away his hands I saw a small cut in his hair. But when he saw me he jumped to his feet. It appears that the briars had scratched my face as well as everything else, and I suppose I looked a pretty object. But all this time we felt there was something wanting, and suddenly faced each other with the cry:

'Where is it?' For the road was empty.

I was so startled and bewildered by this discovery that I did not know what to think, or even how to think, and I don't fancy Geoffrey felt much better. With his handkerchief to his head he walked a few steps forward, and then turned with a shout that made me limp quickly to his side.

There, nearing the bottom of the hill, bustling contentedly along, was the fiend in black and yellow, keeping a fair course, for the road was like a racing track. I can't describe how silly it looked and yet how self-important, and if for the moment we were inclined to doubt our eyes the smell in our noses speedily convinced us. As Geoffrey says (and oh, how often it has been discussed!), he must have wrenched the handle back in the act of being thrown out; then, the motor car recoiling from the sheer bank, simply continued its course, and, of course, as he says, the accident would never have happened if the steering had acted

properly. It was remarked from another quarter that the accident would never have happened if Geoffrey had known how to drive; but that's absurd, for it seems to me that what he doesn't know about machinery of every description isn't worth knowing.

Anyhow there we stood, and there was the motor car snorting fussily along at the bottom of the hill.

'We must stop it!' I cried, starting forward, but Geoffrey held me back.

'Not I!' he remarked; 'I've had enough of the beast. Wait!'

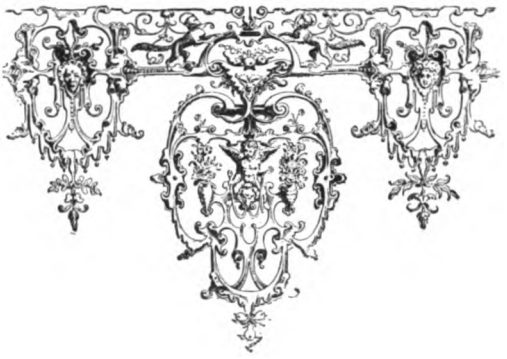
The saddler's was full in view, the first house in the High Street from this side of the town, and the saddler was inside his shop. Hearing familiar sounds approaching he popped out and peered up the road. We weren't near enough to catch the expression on his face, but we saw him suddenly fling up his arms above his head, twice, and drop them again helplessly to his sides, with a gesture which, I believe, is called 'wringing the hands.' I'd never seen it done before. Then, in a frantic sort of way, he started up the road to meet his unenviable possession. It was going badly now, for the surface was uneven at the bottom of the hill, and when it drew nearly abreast of its unhappy master, it suddenly swerved and went for him as straight as a die. For a moment the saddler stood his ground—but the sight of that charging, snorting horror was too much for a man with a wife and family—and he fled. Mr. Morgan loved to air his various accomplishments, but he'd never told us about his sprinting powers. He certainly displayed them that afternoon, and I wouldn't have believed the little man had half the pace in him. His legs simply twinkled across the road, and when he reached the entrance to his yard he was still leading. But the fiend was fearfully close upon him, and hurtled savagely through the empty gate-posts in hot pursuit. Then the wall hid them from our view. What passed within the limits of the saddler's yard no man knows, but that both suffered was evident later, for we heard a crash as of splintering wood, and it was afterwards remarked that the saddler's eyes were more prominent than ever and there were streaks of white in his hair.

There are two ways home to Foxlip, where we live, either by the road or by a long cut through the fields. We took the long cut. As neither of us felt at all well, it was a very long cut indeed.

A few days later we drove through the town on our way

back to school. There, in front of the saddler's shop, stood our friend the motor car, pert and gaudy as usual. But there were signs of new paint on its surface, and an alteration had been made in the placard over the splashboard, for the legend now ran :

MOTOR CAR
FOR
SALE



PAGES FROM A COUNTRY DIARY

March 10.—As far as I am personally concerned the month has assuredly come in like a lion, for during the last fortnight I have been laid low by 'It.' Even as a Russian shepherd, fearful of disaster to his flock, never speaks of a bear by its right name, but invariably refers to it by some dark soubriquet, so do I avoid more than a hint at my ailment, lest in its wrath it turn and smite me again. As usual It came on me without warning: a slight headache when going to rest one night gave no hint of what was to follow—three days of ceaseless tossing on a bed that afforded neither comfort nor repose; of racking pains from head to ankle; of incessant shivering despite a burning pulse.

And then, just as convalescence had really set in, I dared in my blind folly to treat It with contempt, and retribution followed swift and sure. I was really feeling better; I had lunched well, not without the port wine permitted under the circumstances; I had taken a gentle constitutional on the sunny side of the garden; I had actually returned to the house with the intention of enjoying a book until tea time, when Thomas, the gardener, came hurriedly to the side door, and summoned me forth with the news that he had seen a flock of wild duck settle on the Moor Pond. For a moment—why, oh why, did I not obey the impulse!—I was tempted to consign both Thomas and the ducks to a much less humid place than the one in question, and then I hesitated, and suffered the usual fate of the irresolute. 'Were there many of them?' I feebly asked. 'A matter of twenty,' Thomas would think. I paused again. Twenty of them! and to-day was actually the last on which I would be able to shoot anything, much less a wild duck, before next August. The Moor Pond is barely half a mile from the house, and a little more exercise could do me no harm; Belinda was away for the afternoon, she need never know of my indiscretion until the

birds actually appeared on the table, and at this juncture a brief but vivid mind-picture of a plump, brown bird, fragrant of port-wine sauce and lemon juice, finally clenched the matter.

The Moor Pond is not an easy place to stalk ducks on: it lies in one corner of a perfectly flat field, and the only available concealment is afforded by a straggling hedge which runs down one side of it, but this fence is both low and thin, and the man who would make use of it must needs 'craal' like a deerstalker. Now the afternoon was fine, but the morning had been wet, and I had not crawled ten yards before my knees and elbows, and every portion of my anatomy that touched the sodden ground, became imbued with a like humidity. Still, one does not pay much attention to such trifles in the ardour of the chase, and a peep through the hedge rendered me quite unconscious of them. Thomas had neither lied, nor, more extraordinary still, exaggerated. There must have been rather forty than twenty ducks on the water, all unsuspiciously gobbling and feeding away on the rushy margin of the pond.

Nearer and nearer I crawled, until scarce fifty yards remained; I had marked two ducks feeding in a line to take sitting with my first barrel; I was actually sliding the catch of my gun up; success seemed within my very grasp when—may the fate of all meddlesome jades attend the housemaid who let Rip the fox terrier out of the smoking-room into which I had carefully shut him—*yap, yap, yap*, he came squeaking across the field hot foot on my trail; up went every duck's head in a moment, and then, catching sight of me, they rose with a great roar of wings and splashing of water, and went away down wind unharmed by the two fruitless charges of shot that a wet and angry man sent impotently after them.

The weary trudge home seemed thrice its real distance, the sun went in and the east wind blew; my sodden garments clung to my aching knees, and even as I entered the house I felt It touch me once more with its icy finger. In vain did I seek to propitiate it with copious libations of ammoniated quinine; in vain did I retire early to bed beneath a pile of blankets; *on ne badine pas avec la grippe;* and I woke next morning suffering with a relapse from which I am only just recovering.

My one comfort is that Belinda will never know the reason for this until she sees these lines in print, and by then, perhaps, time will a little have condoned the enormity of my offence.

March 13.—A correspondent writes asking for the names of the twelve best sporting books. This, being purely a matter of

taste, is as embarrassing a question to answer, as if one were called on to select the twelve most appetising dishes for dinner. Personally, I think it would be difficult to improve on the following list, but as my correspondent—whom I shrewdly suspect to be a lady—does not state in what direction his or her sporting tastes lie, the books may not afford the same pleasure to another that they do to me. However, here is my selection: 'Handley Cross,' 'Sponge's Sporting Tour,' 'Riding Recollections,' 'The Moor and the Loch,' 'A Hunter's Wanderings in South Africa,' 'Three in Norway,' 'Short Stalks,' 'Wild Beasts and their Ways,' 'Sport' (Bromley Davenport), 'The Wild Beasts of India,' 'Market Harborough,' and, most perfect almost of all, St. John's 'Wild Sports of the Highlands.'

It is curious that, despite the enormous number of works on sport published nowadays, so few of them are written with any pretension to style. The author may be, and no doubt frequently is, an excellent sportsman, thoroughly conversant with his subject; and yet, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, he entirely fails to carry his reader with him, through sheer lack of descriptive power. Contrast the ordinary account of, say, a day's deer-stalking with the perfect narrative of the death of the muckle hart of Ben More, in the last-named book on my list—perfect because so simply written and yet so full of word painting. Or, again, compare the efforts of nearly any present-day writer on sport with the exquisite cameos of country life and scenery to be found in Charles Kingsley's works. How far-reaching even such apparently insignificant things may be is best show by the story of the officer who, reading 'Yeast' when quartered in China, determined then and there to go and hear the author preach as soon as he got back to England, because 'there must be something in a parson who could write so well about fox-hunting.'

March 19.—Had any one told me ten years ago that the day would come when I should ride on a bicycle, I would have laughed him or her to scorn; but had it been further added that I should use it to go a-hunting on, I fear that I should have been provoked to anger. None the less, both prophecies would have come true. For some time past, acting on the urgent advice of my bankers, I have desisted from the pleasures of the chase, and like, I fancy, most men similarly situated, have sedulously avoided all contact with the hunting field. To go fox-hunting in a carriage, or, worse still, on foot, has never had any charm for me; and consequently, when Belinda, fired by

the achievements of a lady friend, suggested a day's hunting on bicycles, I took violent exception to the proposal, pointing out, first, that such furious exercise was incompatible with my present feeble state of health, and secondly, that no one has any business out hunting except on horseback.

None the less, I eventually yielded, having, I must confess, a sneaking desire to see what hunting on a bicycle was like, and, after a first experience of the amusement, am bound to admit that I enjoyed it more than I could have expected: indeed, but for an uneasy feeling that a bicyclist out hunting is an undesirable innovation, I might almost be tempted to repeat the experiment. For to-day all went well; the weather was cool without being cold, the roads were dry, and there was no wind. Moreover, the meet was on an old-fashioned village green, and we were able to dismount and 'stable' our bicycles until hounds moved off to the nearest covert. Here again fortune favoured us; this lay in a valley below the high road, and when hounds found, they—or, rather, the fox—took a most accommodating line, running parallel to, and within sight of the road for nearly two miles. Consequently we were afforded an unrivalled opportunity for criticising the performances of such of our friends and neighbours as were witching the world with noble horsemanship, and of assuring ourselves how much better *we* could have done it had we only had their chances. When Brown was seen waiting to take his turn at a gap, or Smith turning from the line of the chase to avail himself of a friendly gate, the onlookers on the road were not slow to hint how differently they would have acted under similar circumstances. How true is Rochefoucauld's maxim that to view the discomforts of others from a position of personal security has always a charm for poor human nature, a maxim by the way borrowed from Lucretius:

> Suave, mari magno, turbantibus æquora ventis,
> E terra, magnum alterius spectare laborem,

which in the present instance may be freely translated that it is pleasant for a bicyclist on the high road with the wind behind him to see a horseman in difficulties.

But presently hounds turned right-handed, disappeared from both sight and hearing, and, following on their line, we were forced to leave the broad high road for a narrow, rutty, country-lane. Under no circumstances would this have been adapted for bicycling, but when there were crowded into it a dozen

bicyclists of both sexes, as many pony-traps full of excited ladies, the usual extraordinary pedestrians in long flapping ulsters who invariably turn up at meets, and, to crown all, the heavy or road-riding division of the hunt, none of them looking where they were going, and all pedalling, driving, running, and riding their hardest, the situation became rather strained, and not adapted for the nerves of those who, like myself, have never come to regard their bicycles with absolute confidence. So Belinda and I pulled up and let the maddening panoply of the chase sweep by, and, after eating our sandwiches on a sunny bank, we followed slowly on at our ease, eventually proving the truth of the axiom that the race is not always to the swift; for hounds running in a ring, we presently came up with them again, and managed to keep them more or less in sight until their fox ran them out of scent.

Still, although I enjoyed my day's outing, I cannot help feeling that bicyclists are out of place in the hunting field, no doubt a foolish, and possibly a snobbish impression, but from which I cannot entirely dissociate myself. However, I suppose I shall repeat to-day's performance as soon as Belinda wishes it.

March 23.—On all sides one hears of the difficulty of obtaining servants nowadays, and having occasion to make a railway journey to-day I fell in with a friend who related his latest experience of modern domestics. Having advertised for a groom he selected an applicant whose references seemed perfectly satisfactory, and—no doubt foolishly—engaged him without a personal interview. I must premise that my friend's stud consists of a couple of useful, if unornamental 'slaves,' which, *more suorum*, are expected to combine a good deal of harness work with an occasional day's hunting; while his general stable equipment would possibly not pass muster at Melton. The new man—I beg his pardon—gentleman, arrived late one night, and early on the following morning gave notice of his wish to leave immediately, as he ''ad never in 'is life been expected to drive sich 'osses as them!'

March 24.—During the last two days the wind has left the north-east, from which bracing quarter it has unintermittently blown for some months, and veered round to the opposite point of the compass; gentle rains have fallen by night and a warm sun has shone by day; crocuses now flaunt themselves in the borders where, until recently, only the pallid snowdrop blossomed; and a faint tinge of green shows itself in patches

on the more sheltered hedgerows. The first balmy breath of spring has come timidly sighing up from the south :

> White were the moorlands
> And frozen before her :
> Green were the moorlands,
> And blooming behind her.

Alas ! full well do I know that the moorlands will be white again and again before spring really comes ; but none the less this transient pretaste of it has stirred my blood like the rest of the world's, and I have been suffering from a complaint which invariably attacks me with more or less virulence at this season of the year, namely—a great desire to go a-fishing. Consequently I have to-day spent several happy, if slightly unproductive hours, in endeavouring to circumvent the crafty little trout of our local beck. This is not a stream I should select for a day's angling were any other available ; it is of small volume, but just deep enough to necessitate the use of waders ; it is much overgrown with trees, which exact a heavy toll of one's flies ; and the trout it contains are few in number, diminutive in size and exceedingly difficult of capture. Still *quand on n'a pas ce qu'on aime, il faut aimer ce qu'on a,* says the philosophical French proverb, and in my present mood I would angle in a foot-bath rather than not do so at all. Moreover, I am haunted by the memory of a gigantic trout I once hooked in the beck, which must have weighed at least a pound, and have been the great grandfather of every fingerling in the stream. I lost it through having no landing net with me, and though this is a precaution I have never since omitted, on no occasion have I again seen that enormous fish, which afflicts me much as the one-eyed perch did the unhappy angler in Bulwer Lytton's novel.

To-day, although I had but little sport in the strict sense of the word—*i.e.*, catching fish—I enjoyed to the full all the other pleasures of angling. It was good to be abroad in the soft spring sunshine and to listen to the birds singing from pure enjoyment of life ; it was pleasant once more to feel ten feet of green heart springing from one's very wrist, and above all to experience that delightful sensation of 'uncertainty' which constitutes the chief charm of angling, and which, in my opinion, is only enjoyed in its perfection by the wet-fly fisherman on a rapid stream. One never knows under such circumstances what one's next cast may bring forth ; it may, and probably will, be fruitless, it may be 'only a little one ;' it may be the monster of one's dreams. This is a pleasure denied to

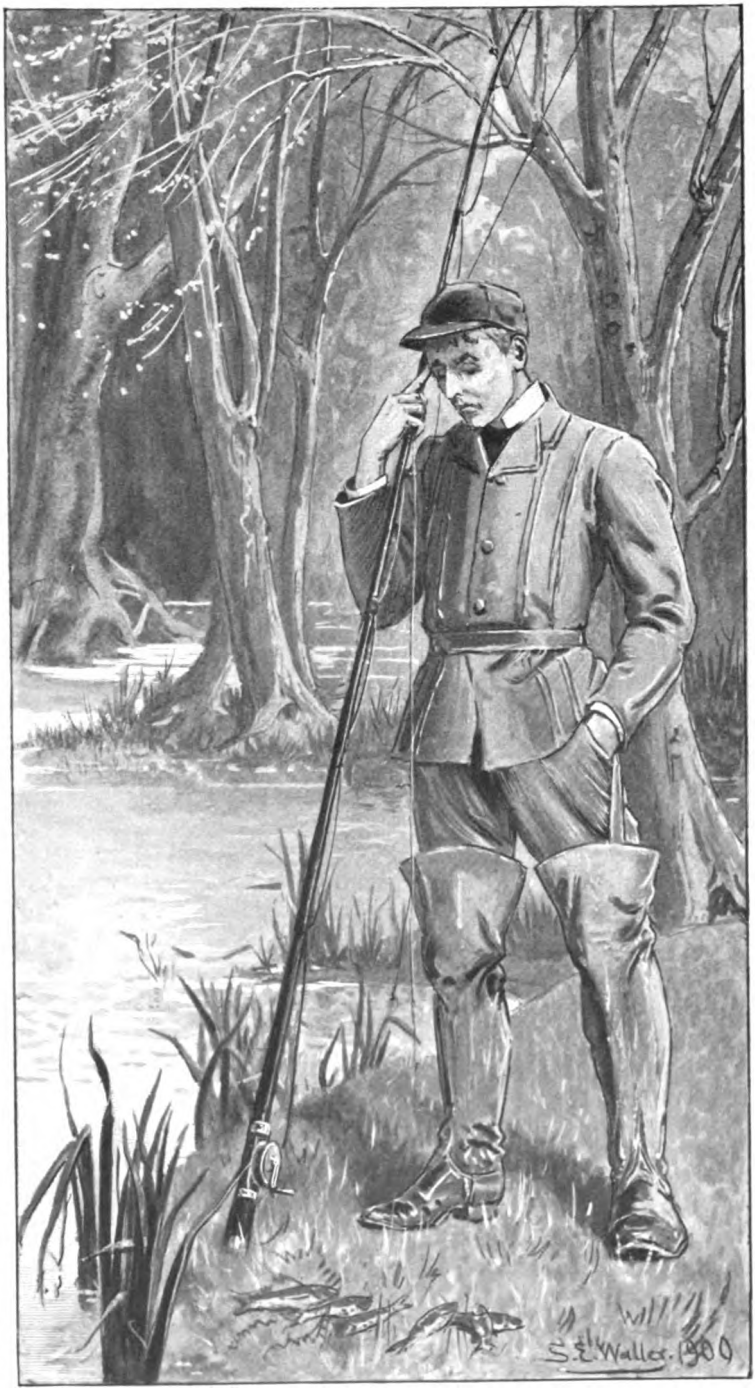
the scientific dry-fly angler of the southern chalk streams, who, as often as not, makes a thorough inspection of his quarry before he attempts to catch it, and then possibly spends an hour in the endeavour. I readily admit the superior skill and patience required for such a performance, but speaking from experience of both styles, I must confess to a humiliating preference for what is contemptuously styled the 'chuck and chance it' method.

I must, however, admit that when I returned home this afternoon my basket might reasonably have excited the scornful derision ot one of the aforementioned chalk-stream scientists, for it contained but six little fishes whose united weight scarce totalled twenty ounces. Still I had to strive hard for even these meagre results: our beck trout are not only few and far between, but exceedingly difficult of circumvention. At all events, I have worked off a little of my angling fever; my limbs ache pleasantly from the unaccustomed exercise of wading and casting, and I look forward to enjoying the sleep of all good anglers, with the pleasant prospect of finding my victims crisply fried on to-morrow's breakfast table.

March 25.—Poor Joe, the silver pheasant, was found dead in his pen this morning: full of years, and I should imagine —presuming it to be an ornithological complaint—of gout, for with the most insatiable appetite he combined the vilest of tempers, being always ready to accept food of any description and then peck the hand that gave it to him—and a peck from Joe's iron beak was not to be treated lightly.

He was certainly the handsomest bird of his kind I ever saw, and an object of great admiration to the proletariat of the neighbourhood, among whom, however, some haziness appears to have existed as to his species, for stopping to speak to old Purves as I came out of church this morning he expressed his regret at hearing of the death of my 'cockatoo.'

March 28.—To dine and sleep at the R's, Belinda being 'billed' to perform at their village concert in aid of the War Fund. The entertainment was of the usual character of these rustic performances, and held in the village schoolroom, where a smell of damp corduroy battled royally with the flavour of the kerosene lamps with which the apartment was illuminated. However, it all passed off very well, from the inevitable overture to 'Zampa' by the vicar's daughters, which opened the proceedings, down to the equally inevitable recitation of the 'Absent-Minded Beggar' by the local station-master, which



'TWENTY OUNCES'

terminated them. This latter performance was received with the most unbounded enthusiasm by the audience, and resulted in a (literal) hatful of coppers being subscribed on the spot.

While on the subject of the war, nothing, no, not even the incompetence of the War Office, has astonished me so much as the manner in which the labouring classes have come forward with their donations. Nearly every house in our village subscribed at least a shilling—many of them far more—and a shilling, though it may only represent a cab fare to most of us, means a good deal to a man who only earns eighteen of them in a week, and has a wife and family to support.

In many cases, too, working men in this neighbourhood have voluntarily agreed to subscribe so much a week as long as the war lasts, while, in addition, they resort to all sorts of curious devices for raising money for the various relief funds. Apropos of this, Jack, who is secretary of the Widows and Orphans Fund in his district of Northumberland, lately told me of a patriotic publican who placed a money-box in his bar, into which every customer making use of bad language was obliged to drop a penny. I am grieved—or should I say pleased?—to add that this ingenious method of raising the wind produces most handsome results, Boniface having already handed over a first donation with the remark that, 'T' sweiring-Kitty had dyune varry canny. Fowk (people) *were fair smitten wi' it.*'

None the less, there are inevitable occasions when personal interests rise superior to patriotism; an amusing instance of which came to my notice last autumn. I had been shooting in the south of Scotland, and having some time to wait at Newcastle for the South express, sallied forth to view the beauties of that not particularly picturesque city. A crowd round the windows of a newspaper office near the station attracted me, and joining it, I found a large placard posted up with the news of the battle of Elandslaagte. I presume it is the custom at Newcastle to announce racing intelligence in the same way, for, as I turned away, three gentlemen, unmistakably connected with the coal-mining industry of the neighbourhood, hurried breathlessly up. One of them shouldered his way through the crowd and began to spell out the placard. 'Whet's woon, Bob?' anxiously demanded his friends from the outskirts of the throng. Bob got as far as 'Great Victory' and then turned away with unfeigned disappointment. 'It's not racing at arl, lads,' he answered in a tone of intense disgust, 'it's nowt but some fond[1] wär niews!'

[1] Foolish.

'WITH DESPATCHES FROM THE FRONT'

BY CHARLES ANDERSON

BULAWAYO.

IT is raining cats and dogs, and we are not by any means too well provided with shelter, as the few tents with which we left Macloutsie have nearly all been dropped at different points on the way up, where we left detachments of fifty men or so to build forts; consequently we have to shift as best we can. I and five other men have taken up our quarters under a waggon, and by spreading the tarpaulin sail over the top and down the windward side of same, we manage to knock along fairly comfortably—I might say fairly frequently also—as it is exceedingly difficult to avoid the axles and crossbeams of the roof, at least, I personally find it so, and one of my chums, who stands six foot four in his socks, appears to suffer even more. He says he won't be able to wear his hat soon because his head is so tender. A moment ago he planted his spurs in the back of my neck and when I remonstrated he withdrew them hastily and promptly caught another fellow under the chin with his knees. We tell him that he ought to give us warning when he intends to move; but he says the cramp comes on suddenly and therefore he has to move suddenly. There may be something in this, perhaps, but he's a beastly nuisance all the same; however, it is his turn to cook the scoff to-day so he'll have to turn out presently.

I had just got as far as this, when one of the F troop

sergeants poked his head under the waggon and asked if any one would volunteer to ride despatches down to Macloutsie.

We all bumped our heads at the same moment and yelled, 'yes!' Whereupon he laughed, and said he didn't think he need go any further, as we were the third lot he had visited and every man had offered to go.

He added our names to his list and totted it up. It came to four-and-twenty. He said two men were wanted and then left us to speculate upon our individual chance of being chosen.

We are now awaiting his return with tremendous excitement, as you will readily understand when I tell you that we have been weeks without eating a decent meal, never thoroughly dry by night or day for more than a few hours at a stretch, our clothes hanging in rags about us, and not even a pipe of tobacco to cheer us. I am even worse off than some of the others, as the waggon which carried the F troop kit was captured and burnt by the niggers about a month ago at a place called Impandine, where we had rather a smart brush with them. Add to this that, although the war seems to be virtually over, we are sure to have to remain up here a month or two longer doing patrols and police work, &c., to say nothing of the weary march down country at the end of it all, which will occupy anything from six weeks to three months according to the state of the rivers, and you will not wonder that the dangers of a two hundred and fifty mile ride—even though half of it be through a hostile country, hardly seems worth consideration in view of the reward it will bring. We calculate it can be done on horseback in six days.

Hurrah! I am to go. The other chap is a man named Talbot, a lance-corporal of E troop, a very decent sort from what I know of him. We start this evening, and have to act as escort, as far as Tati, to Major S. and a Lieutenant E. of the —— Dragoons.

I don't know anything about them, except that they have a couple of pack-horses, which I suppose we shall have to lead—a confounded nuisance. We have made up our minds to reach Macloutsie somehow by Christmas Day. My tunic pockets are simply bulging with letters from fellows here, and Talbot's are the same. Captain Walford, the adjutant, kept several of them back. By way of provisions we have a good supply of meal, some coffee and a little sugar.

MACLOUTSIE.

Here we are after an eventful ride. When we left Bulawayo it seemed any odds against our getting here under a fortnight at

least, as the horses that Talbot and I were mounted on appeared to be in the last stages of starvation, and the pack-horses were, if possible, a shade worse; they were literally as thin as rails. However, we had orders to change horses whenever an opportunity occurred, and fortunately we came across a small detachment of our men within ten miles of the start. They were escorting some waggon-loads of forage, and naturally their horses were in much better condition than ours, so we requisitioned four of the best, much to their annoyance. I may as well say at once that this was a surprising piece of luck, as we never afterwards came across a horse approaching these in point of condition, and, in fact, did the rest of the journey on the same nags. We slept with these people that night, though Talbot and I would much have preferred pushing on by night and resting during the day; but of course, so long as we were in company with the officers we had to abide by what they considered best.

Next morning, after giving the horses a good feed from the waggons, we resumed our journey, and by nightfall had covered some forty miles or so. The day had been fine and we had few difficulties to surmount, except those caused by the pack-horses, which turned out to be perfect brutes, and nearly pulled our arms out of their sockets. It is not by any means an easy job, by the way, to carry a rifle and drag along an unwilling brute of a horse, more especially if your own mount happens to be a practically unbroken colt, as mine was; he was quiet enough, it's true, and as game a little horse as I ever rode, but there were things he didn't understand, one of which being that if he suddenly bolted ahead I was nearly dragged out of the saddle backwards—a fate that nearly befell me on several occasions—and another, that biting and kicking the lead horse was of no earthly use as a means towards making that animal behave decently. I dare say he meant well, but it led to sundry complications of a more or less unpleasant nature.

We spent the night with a detachment of men who were building a fort, and started again at sunrise next morning. It began to rain in torrents about eight o'clock, and never ceased during the whole day. Luckily we had taken the precaution on the previous evening to bake a few cookjes, and with these and some fragments of cold meat that I had preserved from supper, we managed to make some sort of a meal at midday, when we off-saddled for about two hours, knee-haltering the horses as usual.

We calculated that we had travelled fifty miles by sunset, which found us on the bank of a spruit which the heavy rain had swollen into a miniature cataract. It looked very threatening, I admit, but after a consultation with Talbot, we came to the conclusion that it could not be more than a few feet in depth, and we strongly advised crossing it, as the ground rose slightly on the other side, while upon our side it was little better than a swamp. But the Major did not know much about the ways of South African rivers, and nothing would induce him to risk a ducking. He said he was quite wet enough already, and as he and E. got off their horses, there was nothing for it but to do likewise. We mutinied outright, however, when it was suggesfed that we should camp where we were, and insisted upon retracing our steps a matter of a quarter of a mile, where we found a tolerably dry spot, and off-saddled.

While Talbot and I were seeing to the horses the officers sat down at the foot of a camel-thorn, and they looked so intensely miserable that we began to feel quite cheerful—it's a curious thing that if you can only find some one worse off than yourself you should immediately begin to feel so much better. They say comparisons are odious, but one is certainly able to derive much comfort from them at times. It's true they had a bottle of whisky, which we had not, and the fact made us rather envious. However, we reflected that the pack it travelled in might collide with a tree on the morrow, and felt consoled.

After the horses were safely disposed of, the next thing to do was to light a fire, but even Talbot was gloomily incredulous when I announced my ability to do so. As to the Major, I believe he thought I was trying to get a rise out of him when I mooted the idea, and at first flatly refused to move till I pointed out that the place where he was sitting was the only suitable spot for my purpose, as there was no branch on the other side of the tree to which I could attach my blanket as a shelter. At length he yielded, more I fancy because Mr. E. mournfully observed that the other side was no wetter than the one they at present occupied, than because he had any faith in the likelihood of my success.

I set to work at once, my experiences in South America having luckily taught me one or two tips not known to most men. First of all I put up my blanket so as to form a sort of roof, and then collected a few dead twigs from which I sliced the bark, and as much of the wood as had become saturated with the rain, and in a short time had a small bundle

of dry sticks. Of course all this had to be done under the shelter of the blanket, as there was still a deluge of rain falling. After a few fruitless efforts and much judicious blowing and nursing, I at last managed to raise a little tongue of flame, which set Talbot to work paring down sticks as though his very life depended on it.

The glimmer attracted the eye of Mr. E., who nudged his companion and whispered, 'He's making a fire.' 'Rot!' replied the Major. 'But I tell you he is,' said E. again, 'and what's more, I'm going to get some wood,' and suiting the action to the word he jumped up and began breaking off branches like a Trojan.

The Major, however, was still incredulous, until a little puff of smoke was blown across his face. He sniffed it suspiciously for a moment, then, as another and a larger cloud came his way, he suddenly became galvanised into life, and springing to his feet he produced a box of wax matches and handed them to me. It was the one thing needed, and in another half minute the fire was a thing of reality. I even ventured to put on a few damp twigs; they spluttered for a few moments sullenly, but the fire had gained sufficient strength to conquer them and they were alight. Then the Major laughed gleefully and sallied forth in quest of fuel. I still remained by the fire and carefully selected the most promising sticks that came to hand, bestowing a word of praise now and then if a more than usually satisfactory piece were offered to me; in fact, I bossed the situation and felt quite proud. In ten minutes time we had a first-rate blaze and a sufficient stack of fuel to last the night, so I permitted the others to desist from their labours.

We supped off hot coffee and cookjes with a tin of marmalade thrown in for the officers' mess, and by keeping up a roaring fire all night passed it in comparative comfort.

The rain ceased during the night and in the morning we crossed the spruit, which had become almost dry again, after the manner of South African rivers, which change—even the largest of them—from a dry watercourse to a rushing torrent, or *vice versâ*, in the space of a few hours.

We had occasional showers during the day, one of which came on just as we had off-saddled for breakfast. The Major said his liver was troubling him and he did not want any breakfast; but on being pressed, said he thought he could manage half a cup of black coffee without any sugar in it and a slice of dry toast. I managed the coffee all right for him, half

A FIRST-RATE BLAZE

filling a patrol tin ; of sugar we had none, so it was lucky he did not want any—but the dry toast presented insuperable difficulties. It would have tried the ingenuity of the most accomplished *chef* to convert coarse, damp meal into dry toast under a pouring rain, and all I could manage in this respect was a semi-baked cookje. About half a mile further on we came across a small party of men belonging to the Duke of Wellington's regiment. They had been there for three days looking for one of their number who had gone out to try and shoot a buck and had not returned. I hope they found the poor fellow, for it is impossible to imagine anything more awful than being lost in the veldt. And three days is quite long enough. Many a poor devil has lost his reason in that time—I tried it for the best part of a day once myself, and can quite understand it. It is possible that the man may have fallen in with a small party of Matabeles, though I hardly think it likely there would have been any so far south. We never saw a sign of one all the way, though we kept a sharp look out, as you can imagine.

About midday a disagreeable mishap occurred to Talbot while fording a river. We had found the best way of getting the lead horses along was to tie the two together, and while one of us led them, the other rode behind and drove them on. He was leading them at the time, and just as he got to the middle of the stream, which reached to the level of the flap of his saddle, the brutes thought it a fitting opportunity to play the fool and began dancing about in such a manner as to force him out of the direct line of the ford. His horse put his fore feet into a hole and came down, and Talbot, who was wearing his cloak, had the greatest difficulty in getting clear of the beast ; fortunately I managed to reach him a hand and drag him up ; but he had been under water for several seconds and left his rifle at the bottom, for which he had to dive and grope as best he could till at length he found it.

The next untoward event that occurred was that the officers' horses began to show signs of fatigue when we were about twenty miles from Tati, so they changed to the pack horses. Our horses were still as fresh as paint ; but then we were both light weights whereas they were heavy men.

The change seemed to answer for a mile or two more, but it soon became evident that even the packs were too much for the poor beasts, so the officers left us and rode on ahead. We off-saddled for an hour and then tried again ; but with no success. The horses were too thoroughly beat to get along at

all and it began to look like having to spend another night in the veldt, when we were so near Tati and shelter.

We called a halt to consider matters and I suggested that Talbot, who was in a miserable plight after his immersion, should go on and leave me to follow in the morning. To this, however, he would not agree, and upon suddenly remembering that he had been carrying the matches—and upon examination of these invaluable articles, discovering that they were reduced to a pulpy mass—we made up our minds to follow the lead of our superiors: so we turned the tired horses loose, after knee-haltering them and removing their burdens, and then, impelled by a not unnatural curiosity, we examined the packs that had been so fruitful a source of discomfort to us. We found, among other things, pyjamas, underlinen, shaving tackle, seven pairs of boots, a tin or two of marmalade, a box of cigarettes, and some Abernethy biscuits. These latter articles we promptly commandeered, and, borrowing a tin of marmalade, had a right royal repast. Alas, we had no serviceable matches, so the cigarettes escaped! It was tantalising in the extreme after the many weary days without a smoke, and I tried very hard to dry some matches by rubbing them in my hair, which, as a rule, is very effective; but on this occasion they were past even this, so we had to do without. It was dark by then and raining again like—well, whatever you'd say yourself—and we still had some miles to go, we thought about fifteen, though it turned out to be really not much more than ten, so we reached Tati in fairly good time after all.

II

The morning after our arrival found us as jolly as sand-boys. We had had a good supper over night and a good sleep under a water proof tent, even enjoying the luxury of taking our clothes off, and were looking forward with considerable pleasure to breakfast, when our hopes were dashed to the ground at one fell swoop. We learnt that a most diabolical plot had been hatched by the officers for our undoing. The information reached us through the servant of the officer in charge of the station; and it was owing to this timely hint that we subsequently succeeded in evading the fate in store for us.

You see, the heavy rains had caused the River Tati, on the northern bank of which the camp was situated, to rise to such an extent as to render the crossing of it a matter of some difficulty; however, we had already had a look at it and did

not doubt our ability to negotiate the obstacle; but the River Shashi, a much more formidable stream, lay only half a day's ride to the south, and after mature consideration we had reluctantly come to the conclusion that it would be better to stay where we were till the following morning, in the hope that the rain might cease during the day and the water subside somewhat. Now, it seems our superiors had formulated other plans for us. In their opinion it appeared preferable that the despatches should be handed over to them for conveyance to Palapye—Khama's capital—between which place and Tati a coach runs at intervals. It was by this route that they intended travelling down to Vryburg, where they would take the train to Capetown. What they intended to do with us we never learnt, probably we should have been sent back to Bulawayo—a plan that did not suit our books at all; so we reasoned with ourselves that according to orders our connection with Major S. terminated upon our arrival at Tati, as far as which place we had been instructed to escort him. This we had fulfilled. *Ergo*, we were now our own masters. However, we did not wish to court the unpleasantness of having to refuse a request from those set in authority over us, and we deemed it advisable to make ourselves scarce before such a proceeding became necessary; so we hastily saddled up, and bidding a tender, indeed, an almost tearful, 'Good-bye' to our hosts and their breakfast, we skirted round the back of the store, which hid us from sight of the officers' quarters, and managed to reach the drift unchallenged.

On our march up country the river had been absolutely dry, so much so in fact, that we had been compelled to dig holes in the sandy bottom in order to obtain water; but now it was a very different thing, the water was up to within a few feet of the top of the banks and rushing down between them at a tremendous rate. It must have been fully fifty feet deep in the centre and I should guess about a hundred and twenty yards across. I must say the yellow, oily-looking torrent did not look at all inviting, and my little horse refused point blank to face it. However, Talbot's horse was a more seasoned campaigner and made very little bones about it. He felt his way carefully in, snuffing the water as he went and cautiously trying the nature of the ground before trusting his weight upon it. A lead was all my youngster needed, and he followed, albeit somewhat timorously, in the wake of his companion. I was prepared for his attempt to swerve when his feet failed to find

bottom and frustrated it by a slap on the nose with my open hand. And next moment all his energies were concentrated in swimming for dear life. He gave a little snort of terror at the first plunge, but after a few strokes his confidence seemed to return and he swam forward steadily enough. A capital performer he turned out to be too, keeping his back well out of the water and his head turned slightly up stream. I got across almost dry-shod in fact.

I forgot to say that, when we about the middle, we fancied (?) we heard a shout from behind; but, of course, we were far too busy to pay any attention to such a trifle till we reached the other side. When we had both landed safely, we turned our heads to see what it was all about, and saw several figures on the opposite bank waving and shouting to us; but the swirl and rush of the water prevented us from clearly understanding what they were saying. However, by the help of their actions, we interpreted their meaning to be a wish to congratulate us on our successful passage and a God-speed for the rest of the journey. We shook our heads vigorously and pointed to our ears in order to let them understand that we could not hear the exact text of their message; but, that they should not think us wanting in courtesy, we returned their salutations in kind, which seemed to please them much, as they redoubled the vigour of their gesticulations. It quite warmed our hearts to think what friends we had managed to make during our short stay. I believe they would have been glad to see us back again; indeed, we half thought we caught words to that effect. But, of course, to return was quite out of the question. We were carrying news for which the entire British Empire was waiting with breathless expectation; so, with a final wave of the hand, we turned our faces southward and cantered gaily off.

We reached the Shashi about two o'clock in the afternoon, and saw some waggons on the other side. The men who were with them came down to the edge of the river, and we recognised by the uniforms that they were some of our own corps.

We shouted to them and asked if it were possible to cross. They said that a chap had done so on the previous evening, but had nearly got drowned, and that the river was full of crocodiles. They had been waiting a week for the drift to be passable. We then inquired if they had plenty of grub, and, on their replying in the affirmative, we decided to risk the crocodiles.

It was strange how distinctly we managed to hear this,

TOO BUSY TO TURN OUR HEADS TILL SAFELY ACROSS

considering that the distance was much greater than the width of the Tati. Perhaps the wind had fallen, or something.

We stripped ourselves to the skin this time, and tied our clothes in bundles to the pummels of our saddles, in case the current should prove too strong for the horses and carry them past the drift on the opposite side—the only place it would be possible for them to land at, a cutting being made in the steep banks on either side of the river to allow of waggons crossing. A man might manage to scramble out at other points, perhaps, with the help of a friend on the bank, but for a horse it would be quite impossible. Neither could one enter the river anywhere else, so you see it was necessary to keep an absolutely straight line across; and unless one is very careful his horse is apt to go with the current instead of fighting against it, and if his nose does get turned down stream it is practically all up.

We managed it by the skin of our teeth, but I don't think I should like to risk it again; it was a close shave and no mistake —I hadn't a foot to spare.

We found that the waggons were *en route* from Macloutsie to Tati with stores and provisions of all sorts—among other things some barrels of 'dop' (Cape brandy) and a *gimlet*. We found it very refreshing after our swim. We stayed with the waggons all the afternoon and cleaned some of the rust off our rifles, which were in an awful state; then we resumed our journey when the moon rose, keeping steadily on till ten o'clock the next morning, with the exception of a couple of hours' rest about sunrise. From ten to four we off-saddled, taking it in turn to keep an eye on the horses and not allowing them to stray too far away.

When we remounted again I felt that there was something the matter with my little horse—he still kept on going, but there was no life in him at all. Through the night he seemed to get worse and worse, and by morning, Christmas day, had developed unmistakable symptoms of horse sickness. This scourge of South Africa is so sudden in its action, that we entertained serious doubts of his being able to finish the journey, and thought it best to push on as rapidly as possible.

We had rather a funny encounter a little after noon. We came suddenly upon a waggon, outspanned by the side of the road, and a gaunt looking man lying at full length in the shade it afforded. I think he was the most laconic individual I ever came across. He sat up as we approached and stared at us.

I think I must give you the conversation that passed between us just as it occurred.

The two of us together: 'A merry Christmas to you!'

The Stranger: 'Eh?'

'A merry Christmas.'

'Why?'

'Because it's Christmas day.

'Is it?'

'Of course it is. Can you tell us how far it is to Macloutsie?'

'No.'

'Where are you going?'

'Nowhere in particular.'

'What are you doing?'

'Hunting.'

'Hunting what—anything in particular?'

'No, nothing in particular.'

'Where have you come from?'

The stranger waved his arm towards the west.

I thought perhaps a drink would loosen his tongue, so I unslung my water bottle, which we had filled up with 'dop' before leaving the waggons, and offered it to him. 'Have a drink,' I said. He had one. 'Try a drop more,' I suggested. He had a drop more, then returned the water-bottle and sat down. As he vouchsafed nothing further, and our stock of questions was pretty well exhausted, we wished him good-day. In reply to this he grunted—not a surly grunt by any means, on the contrary it savoured distinctly of affability, as though the grunter felt that his thanks were due to us. Then he quietly stretched himself out in the shade again, in the same position in which we had found him, and we rode away.

I honestly believe the man did not know in the least where he was, and I should imagine cared still less.

This happened about ten miles from the camp only, though it took us until nearly three o'clock to reach it, I having to lead my horse the last two or three miles.

When we finally arrived our first duty, of course, was to deliver the despatches, and after that we were fairly mobbed by the garrison. I don't know how many invitations we had to dinner, but I do know that we accepted the one offered by the mess that had procured a turkey, a goose, and a plum-pudding from home, and after we had given my poor little nag in charge of the farrier corporal, who turned him into a

comfortable loose box in the sick lines, we ate that dinner. By Jove, we did eat too! Personally I don't think I ever stowed away so much in any other two dinners as I managed to get through on that evening. And that night we slept in beds.

We had covered the distance from Bulawayo in a little over five days, and considering that almost the entire journey had been done on the same horses I don't think it is a bad record. But, alas, when I went to see how the invalid had fared during the night, I found the poor beast dead. I can't tell you how sorry I was, I didn't realise till then how fond I had grown of him—I could have cried, I was so cut up.

We have been granted a week's leave, which really means a week of loafing, as there is nowhere to go on leave to, and nothing to do if there were ; but we are enjoying it first rate and I have been filling up some of my *spare* time by writing this.

THE COMING CRICKET SEASON

BY HOME GORDON

LOVERS of our national summer sport can certainly anticipate an eventful and exciting season. The absence of an Australian invasion will concentrate attention on County cricket which, in the opinion of many experts, is by far the most interesting branch of the game. But the question at once arises whether the pace is not too hot to last. The strain which County cricket, in its modern development, entails on the health and stamina of both professionals and amateurs, as well as on the time of the latter, suggests the problem whether there are not too many matches at the present day.

Whilst the minor counties have formed an emergency committee to secure a recognised system of promotion by merit, it may, on the other hand, be reasonably asserted that there are already too many counties on a nominal equality of first-class rank. It will soon become a matter of debate whether these latter should not be divided into the First and Second Division, first-class averages being of course recognised in both.

If this tentative suggestion were adopted, Surrey, Middlesex, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Sussex and Essex would all compete for the championship of 1900, as they were the first six counties of 1899. The next four, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire, Kent and Notts, should play among themselves in May and the two winners would also compete in the first batch, the other two playing with Hants, Worcestershire, Somersetshire, Leicestershire and

Derbyshire in the Second Division. By this plan each of the first six counties would only play fourteen matches, every one of which would be a tussle of genuine importance. Following out this principle, Leicestershire and Derbyshire ought to compete with Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire, who were top of the minor counties in 1899. But the most enthusiastic adherents of these latter could hardly hope that they could defeat and so dislodge their opponents.

The enormous contemporary popularity of good cricket is unparalleled. But it must not be forgotten that it is menaced by three detrimentals—(1) The increasing number of drawn games, nearly fifty per cent.; (2) the growing dislike of slow batting, which is more prevalent than it was a few years back, even though the late W. Scotton, L. Hall, Mr. Herbert Whitfeld, Mr. Eustace Crawley, Mr. C. W. Rock and several others no longer play; (3) the general deterioration in fielding. This last evil is evident to the most casual spectator. Complaints are heard of the bowling being unable to beat the batting on good wickets, but if all the catches that come to hand were held, there would not be fifty per cent. of these drawn games. Individuals are brilliant, but in 1899 no county fielded like Notts in 1881, Lancashire in 1887 or Yorkshire in 1897. Further mitigation of drawn games might be achieved by starting matches on the second day at 11 and by playing in June and July until 7. Close of play at 6.30 is a recent innovation which much disappoints business men who are desirous of catching a glimpse of the game, and the new tea interval is an additional waste of time which has been known to extend to fifteen or twenty minutes.

It has been asserted that there is too much legislation over modern cricket. However, it may be well to remind readers that in future *both* umpires can penalise an unfair bowler, that the M.C.C. committee have recommended six balls to an over, that the declaration shall be permissible at lunch time on the second day, and that the side 150 runs ahead shall have the option of making their opponents follow on. The lbw. question is more rampant than ever, general irritation being aroused by the deliberate action of some of the leading professional batsmen. The barrier proposal, the fourth stump, the heightening of the wicket, and the diminution of the width of the bat are still innovations by no means thoroughly debated. Mr. A. G. Steel thinks that a narrow bat would produce a much freer game. If so, by all means let it be tried.

He also suggests a most interesting experiment. Two good sides at Lords, as evenly matched as possible, one side to play with the present bats and stumps heightened two inches, the other with the present stumps and bats an inch and a half narrower. Even though one game could not be conclusive, it would afford some indication of the effect of the innovations on the game. This proposal recalls the match at Lords in August 1832, when the Players, defending wickets of the size now in use, defeated the Gentlemen, defending wickets 22 inches by 6 inches, by 1 innings and 34 runs. That game, by the way, was the first in which Mr. Alfred Mynn took part at Lords.

In dealing with the counties in alphabetical order, the writer desires to express his warm thanks to those county secretaries and others who so kindly afforded information. Two or three officials failed to do so, but in these cases other sources of intelligence were open. The one exception is Northamptonshire. On various cricket matters the writer has lately had to make five applications to the secretary and assistant secretary, both absolutely unknown to him. Although stamped envelopes were in all cases sent, not a single answer was returned. No doubt the executive prefer to keep the prospects of their team in obscurity, but such a course is not conducive to the publicity which would assist promotion and popularity.

Derbyshire, who have lately been dogged by ill-luck, will have all last season's players available except Mr. R. Kenward, who has gone out with the Imperial Yeomanry. Trials will be given to Mr. A. E. Lawton, a hard-hitting bat, to Cadman of Glossop, who has a big local reputation both at the wicket and in the field, and to Green of Pilsley, a left-handed, medium paced bowler. Despite the unfortunate wicket prepared at Glossop last season, two county fixtures, with Lancashire and Warwickshire, are to be decided on the local ground. Mr. S. H. Wood, the present captain, resides in the vicinity. Notts and Worcestershire are to be met at Chesterfield, the other county fixtures, as well as the game with the West Indians, and the home match with the London County Club, are to be at Derby. On the present composition of the team there is little temptation to dwell. Storer is a host in himself, and Hulme is a valuable bowler, but little can be said about the rest, although Mr. L. G. Wright at times bats well. Chatterton seems past his prime, and the slack fielding is often detrimental to the weak attack.

In connection with Essex cricket it may be well to allude to a fallacy still prevalent that the county ground is so inaccessible from the metropolis. It takes no longer to get from the City to Leyton than to Lord's, and the special trains run for the county matches are most convenient. Remembering the plucky fight Mr. C. E. Green so long made, and the able manner in which he has been supported by Mr. O. R. Borrodaile, it is a satisfactory tribute to their efforts to notice that the County Cricket Club now has 2200 members. Mr. A. J. Turner will not be available for some time, as he is in the 78th Battery under Sir Redvers Buller, whilst his brother, Mr. W. M. Turner, is bound for India. As a recompense Mr. C. J. Kortright is once more fit and well. Mr. A. P. Lucas will play pretty regularly, Mr. F. L. Fane will be constantly available, and Mr. Borrodaile believes that Ayres, Inns and Mr. G. Tossetti will do better than of yore. Mr. Perrin, Mr. McGahey and Carpenter ought to prove as invaluable as ever, and it is hoped that the doughty captain, Mr. H. G. Owen, will regain his form. No county possesses a more formidable quartette of bowlers than Mr. Kortright, Mr. Bull, Mead and Young. The difference of pace and style is remarkably contrasted, and the wish may be expressed that they should be supported by less indifferent fielding. A likely young bat is Mr. W. O. Faveill of Forest School, who is only sixteen, but stands six feet two inches. Mr. C. E. Green has, at his own expense, engaged Robert Peel and Alfred Shaw for the April practice. The committee think that the County fixtures are quite sufficient for their team, so extra matches are not favoured at Leyton. The Second Eleven has six games. It is impossible to overestimate the value to a county team of this subordinate organisation whereby a reserve force of competent young cricketers is trained and press hard on the heels of those who might be tempted to grow stale were there none to follow them. Behind, again, is that friendly and useful body engaged in Club and Ground matches, so Essex cricket is worked on a sensible and systematic basis.

Dr. E. M. Grace has nothing special to communicate about Gloucestershire, but a few comments may be added. Mr. Troup having returned to India, the county is to be congratulated on obtaining so spirited a captain as Mr. G. L. Jessop, one of the most determined cricketers of the day. But it may be discreetly hinted that it probably needs more tact to keep a county eleven on friendly terms than to direct the brief

campaign of an University team. Attention will be mainly directed to Paish, who is the best professional bowler the county has produced since Woof, and the most promising English colt since Wilfrid Rhodes. Mr. Sewell is dropping out of county cricket, and Mr. F. H. B. Champain will not play regularly; but Mr. C. L. Townsend is a tower of strength, and Wrathall a valuable aid. The advance in his batting curiously coincided with the retirement from captaincy of Dr. W. G. Grace. Matches with Dublin University, the two Colonial visiting teams, and home and home engagements with Worcestershire are added to last year's list of fixtures, whilst the Second Eleven will meet Monmouthshire at Bristol and Newport.

Of all counties, Hampshire will be most affected by the military situation, for Major Poore, Colonel Spens, Captain Bradford, Captain Barton, Mr. E. M. Sprot, Mr. E. I. M. Barrett, and Mr. H. W. Studd are in South Africa, whilst Mr. Christopher Heseltine sailed with one of the earliest detachments of the Imperial Yeomanry. At the time of writing, Captain E. G. Wynyard is also abroad, and it seems premature to say if he will be seen regularly in the field. Mr. G. C. B. Llewellyn, who so favourably impressed the Australians last year, will not be qualified until 1901. Mr. A. J. L. Hill cannot be relied on right through the season, though he will be frequently seen in first-class cricket. Dr. Russell Bencraft regretfully writes that he is afraid there are no colts of great promise training on, so that despite his enthusiastic efforts, to which the county owes an immense debt, he holds out little hope of material advance in the present year.

The Kent eleven will be made up pretty much the same as last summer, except that Mr. A. H. Du Boulay, Mr. R. O. H. Livesay and Mr. L. J. Le Fleming are in South Africa, whilst Walter Wright has been appointed a county umpire. The executive regard Blythe, Humphreys and Murrell as the most promising youngsters; indeed, high expectations are entertained of the bowling of the first-named. Second Eleven matches are again to be played with Sussex, and several Club and Ground matches against local teams will, it is hoped, dig out untried talent. At Canterbury a new pavilion is in course of erection at a cost of two thousand pounds. The matches for the historic Week are against Lancashire and Surrey, the latter being allotted to Martin for his benefit. The Tonbridge Week has become quite a Kentish institution. Matches with Sussex and Middlesex form the fixtures. A curious comment on the

successful batting of the old Cantab, Mr. T. N. Perkins, is that his services were first offered to Essex and declined, whereupon he availed himself of his qualification for the Hop County. Mr. Mason will have the invaluable bowling of Mr. Bradley all through the season, Mr. Burnup will play constantly, and Mr. S. H. Day after the University match.

From Lancashire comes no information, and about this county it is always difficult to speak with certainty. The curiously shifting *personnel* of the amateurs in the last few years makes it impossible to regard any one as permanent, especially when professionals of the rank of Mold and Baker are left out after a brief spell of bad luck. Briggs and Hallam can no longer be considered, whilst Mr. A. N. Hornby is fifty-three, and has met with a severe accident in the hunting field. Great cricketer though he is, Mr. A. C. MacLaren has not inherited to the full the spell his predecessor wrought as captain. The personal magnetism of Mr. Hornby over the Lancashire team has never been surpassed. The worst news is that Mr. R. H. Spooner, a magnificent young batsman, will probably be debarred by business from participating in good cricket. Sharp is a valuable recruit of whom much may be hoped, especially if football does not engage his attention next August. Tyldesley is one of the leading professional bats of the day, and Cuttell excels in all departments. It is improbable that Albert Ward will long be found an effective bowler, and his batting is less effective than it was a few seasons back. The county wicket-keepers, though efficient, are not in the first flight. There is an opening for a new Pilling.

In Leicestershire the executive are very hopeful that an improvement will be made upon the meagre results of the last three years. The secretary lays stress on the fact that the eleven was the youngest county team last season. Two new left-handed bowlers will be tried—Dixon, a fast trundler with rather a slinging action, and Marlow, who is much slower. Mr. C. E. de Trafford will again captain the eleven, but Mr. H. H. Marriott is not expected in the earlier months, and Mr. Fowke will, of course, keep his University term. Knight's development as a bat was a conspicuous feature of 1899, and Woodcock is fortunately in better health. The West Indians are to be encountered at Leicester, where the Aylestone ground has been well looked after during the winter.

Few counties play such attractive cricket as Middlesex, but their team varies a good deal because many of the best amateurs

are not free until the end of July. Mr. Stoddart intimates that he will not play at all, nor can Sir Timothy O'Brien and Mr. Cunliffe be considered on the active list. Mr. Gregor MacGregor will captain the eleven whenever he can get away from the Stock Exchange, and he can always rely on the assistance of those two fine bats, Mr. F. G. J. Ford and Mr. P. F. Warner. The latter, who now plays more cricket than any other amateur, is publishing a record of his five tours, which will be in the hands of the public in the course of a few weeks. Trott is, of course, a tower of strength, and it is hoped that J. T. Hearne will regain his old skill. He was steadily overbowled at Lord's for several seasons, and the strain has told upon him. The Whit Monday match has been allotted to him for a benefit, and every one will wish him a bumper. It will be found that more reliance is to be placed on the bowling of Roche, but Rawlin may not be so regular a member of the side. A welcome addition to the card is home and home engagements with Essex.

At Trent Bridge they still adhere to that odd anachronism a colts' match on Easter Monday. Considering that no competent cricketer is in form by April 16, it is rather foolish to expect novices to play up to the mark, nor is it possible to resist the conviction that success or failure under such circumstances is little else than a fluke. Slow cricket has, of course, materially damaged the attracting power of the Nottingham side, but so brilliant a bat as Mr. A. O. Jones affords compensation for hours of Dench or Mason. To Shrewsbury is accorded a benefit, and no doubt the committee realise how time menaces his marvellous batting powers, as also those of Gunn. At present their successors have not been discovered. The bowling is deplorably weak, for Attewell in twenty-one efforts only took nineteen wickets, whilst J. Gunn and Wass, though useful, sadly need better support. The fielding is in many cases below even the moderate modern standard. Mr. J. A. Dixon, the keen and valued captain, is a great advocate for the fourth stump, an unlikely innovation. The member of the committee who is so perturbed over the lbw. question may be reminded that two illustrious Notts batsmen are among the worst offenders.

Somersetshire has of late done none too well, and the county executive appear deficient in energy and enthusiasm. Such shortcomings can never be laid to the charge of their President, that fine old sportsman Sir Spencer Ponsonby Fane, nor to their plucky captain, Mr. S. M. J. Woods. Mr. L. C. H. Palairet will be regularly a member of the team once more.

His recent absence was the most severe blow the county had sustained since the retirement of Mr. H. T. Hewett. Mr. R. C. N. Palairet will play more rarely. Efficient professional talent is sorely needed, for, though the ex-Surrey acquisition, Braund, is a dashing bat, he will never be a deadly bowler. It is in this department that the most deplorable weakness is visible, and, as Major W. C. Hedley is now with the Royal Engineers in South Africa, the run-getting of their opponents is sure to be heavy. Mr. C. A. Bernard and Mr. Daniell should train into excellent bats, but the eleven is subject to such frequent variations that it is difficult to keep even half a dozen cricketers playing constantly through a season. The Club and Ground matches ought eventually to bring some useful colts to the notice of the selection committee. Griffin, Cranfield, and Gill, for example, at the present date do not inspire a cricket critic with confidence. The supply of competent wicket-keepers seems inexhaustible.

Surrey, having carried off the county championship, are sure to make a bold bid to retain it. Reliance will mainly be placed on the men who enabled the eleven to come out head of the list last year. The programme is of portentous length, including matches with every other county, two games with London County Club, two with Cambridge, and one with Oxford University, as well as an encounter with the West Indians. For once few county fixtures clash with Gentlemen *v.* Players, so more representative elevens may be expected. The Harrovian, Mr. E. M. Dowson, will probably be found in the ranks of the county for which his father did great feats. He will not appear until July, and it remains to be seen if in good company he can recover his early skill with the ball. Though the admirable Second Eleven continues its successful career, the extraordinary immunity from defeats must be attributed to a high standard of ability rather than to individual prowess which is likely to reinforce the county team. The actual record of the Second Eleven is three defeats in seven years, Glamorganshire beating them at the Oval by 53 runs on June 14, 1899, and Worcestershire twice in the previous year.

The crushing need of Surrey is an efficient wicket-keeper to replace the veteran Wood, who is in his forty-seventh year. Two new bowlers of front rank are also eminently desirable, for Richardson may never recover his old form, though he believes he will ; and however finely Lockwood may perform, there is always the risk of the old strain attacking the muscles of his thigh.

It is notorious that Hayward detests bowling, and his great value as a bat makes it desirable to relieve him of other efforts so far as possible. This also applies to Brockwell, one of the keenest and most hard-working professionals of the day. He has richly earned the great benefit allotted to him (Surrey *v.* Yorkshire) in July next, and during the winter has been making large scores in India. Abel, the finest of all diminutive batsmen, has on the Oval no living superior, but, like several others in the team, his value must to some extent be discounted by occasional catches dropped. These are a terrible deterrent to victory on the fine home wickets. The lobs of Mr. D. L. A. Jephson are the best of the day, and his value to his county would be even greater if he would more frequently hit as hard as at the two last Hastings Weeks. Unfortunately, Mr. K. J. Key will not again direct Surrey's plan of campaign, and his successor will have difficulty in filling the arduous post. Hayes should train on, and more confidence would be felt in Mr. V. F. S. Crawford if he exhibited more care. The rare appearances of Mr. H. D. G. Leveson-Gower are regrettable because of his brilliant fielding, invaluable personal enthusiasm, and stubborn batting powers. One of the most astute judges of the game is the deservedly popular secretary, Mr. C. W. Alcock, and it is his opinion that of the youngsters Wardroper shows most promise. Members will be glad to learn that the awning in front of the pavilion has been extended on both sides. A familiar figure lost is that of Colonel Bircham, one of the warmest and most genial supporters of the game. Not only will his death be deeply felt by the committee, but he will be sincerely regretted by a host of friends.

Mr. W. Newham, the Sussex secretary, afforded no information in reply to inquiries, possibly because his own career as a cricketer has closed. Mr. C. B. Fry will not be available, and his absence is to be regretted. Had the War Office seen fit to employ Indian troops, Kumar Shri Ranjitsinhji would also have been on active service. He will, however, resume his old place, and it is to be hoped will not continue to change his bowling with such perplexing frequency. Killick, who will still play in spectacles, is expected to improve upon his own vast improvement last season. The Yorkshire importation Cordingley will, when qualified, materially strengthen the attack. It was the merest chance whether he or Wilfrid Rhodes were given the last place in the Tyke team *v.* M.C.C. in May 1898. The latter was selected, and began his first-class career by taking 4 wickets

for 24 runs. Cordingley never received a trial. Students of heredity should no'ice the extraordinary resemblance between the lobs of young W. Humphreys and those his father, 'the cobbler,' used to send down. For the Hastings Week, North *v.* South and Married *v.* Single are announced. One of the earliest recorded matches of this nomenclature was at Lords in 1849, when the bachelors won by 3 wickets. It was also played at the Oval in 1858, at Lords in 1871, when Dr. W. G. Grace scored 189 not out, and in May 1892 for Clayton's benefit. At Parson's Green, on September 17, 1835, eleven single women played eleven married women for £10 and a hot supper. The spinsters were victorious by 7 runs.

The tediousness of Warwickshire batting makes the county team less attractive than the intrinsic ability deserves, whilst the bowling is painfully monotonous. Two colts of promise, who will not, however, be qualified until 1901, are Whittle, a 'double-handed man,' and F. Moorhouse, brother of the Yorkshire player. Mr. Bainbridge will resume his old place, but Mr. Glover is at present abroad, Mr. J. F. Byrne is at Kimberley, and Mr. F. R. Loveitt has become an Imperial Yeoman Mr. Manton, a Master at King Edward's Grammar School, is to have a trial, Mr. T. B. Rhodes will assist and Mr. T. S. Fishwick can play regularly. Hargreave, a left-handed bowler, who played in the final engagement against Surrey and made top score (44) though he went in last, will be given a further probation. All the regular professionals are re-engaged. Nine first-class counties will be met, the Bank Holiday fixtures being with Worcestershire. Staffordshire and the West Indians are also on the card of prospective encounters.

Worcestershire certainly can show one of the most interesting contemporary elevens. Indeed, the brilliancy of the foremost bats was last year more marked than their discretion. Of the Fosters, the Oxford captain will not be available until July, and the soldier brother is engaged in the war; but the racquet champion can be relied on and he will have the assistance of both Bromley-Martins. Though Arnold is valuable, he did not please the critics when he appeared for the Players at the Oval. Burrows and Wilson are useful bowlers, but more strength is needed in this department. A less pretentious or more efficient wicket-keeper than Straw would be difficult to discover. Encouraged by the success of the first season in good company, Worcestershire will play twenty county matches besides two matches with the London County, Oxford University, M.C.C.,

and the West Indians. They will carry the good wishes of all lovers of the game.

Yorkshire will once more face a formidable card of fixtures, and the delightful cricket played by their representatives makes them immensely popular. The war will prove especially detrimental, as that splendid Old Harrovian, Mr. F. S. Jackson, has gone to the front. Mr. Frank Mitchell, a serviceable bat, is also in South Africa, and the hopes entertained of the return of that enthusiastic sportsman, Mr. F. W. Milligan, have now no prospect of being realised. Lord Hawke can, however, count on the more regular assistance of Mr. Ernest Smith, a batsman of incalculable possibilities, and probably the two Cantabs, Mr. Taylor and Mr. E. R. Wilson, will be invited after the end of June. The professionals, who are among the most obliging and the most respected in England, are all in good health, and J. T. Brown of Driffield as well as J. T. Brown of Darfield have recovered from the accidents which had laid them by. Rhodes is the Cock o' the North in bowling, and Haigh will be back in his best form. To criticise the batting in detail would be superfluous, not the least merit being the fact that the strain of a long season never seems to tire its brightness. It is open to doubt if any county team ever fielded in finer form than the Tykes in 1897, and sincerely may it be hoped that they will again attain this standard of brilliancy in the coming summer.

At Oxford, the Old Malvernian, Mr. R. E. Foster, has no fewer than seven old choices in residence, and his experience with Worcestershire last year should make him an admirable captain. Mr. H. Martyn ought to justify the opinion of the Old Blue who told the present writer that he considered him the finest wicket-keeper his University had selected for twenty years. It is indeed regrettable that he should be lost to county cricket, but Devonshire cannot even cope with the second-class group. Mr. F. P. Knox should, with added experience, come into the foremost rank of amateurs. Among the Freshmen are no fewer than six of last year's Winchester eleven ; but the pick of the public schools have gone to Cambridge. The Harrovian, Mr. H. J. Wyld, should get his colours. The fate of a candidate for the University Eleven is often decided before other cricketers have put on their pads, and spring trials do not show the real form of colts. The programme is to be extended by home and home engagements with Sussex, the Brighton match last year having yielded the huge aggregate of 1118, averaging 34 runs per wicket.

The Cantabs ought to be formidable, for the Yorkshireman, Mr. T. L. Taylor, has some fine Freshmen to reinforce his Old Blues. Mr. Dowson has been an annual thorn in Eton's flesh for five years. Inheriting all his father's ability, he should make a splendid chip of the old block if he will take sufficient pains. Despite a bad start for Leicestershire, which entirely belied his Uppingham form, Mr. Fowke will be a valuable cricketer, for he is a correct bat and bowls with his head. Of the Old Blues, Mr. E. R. Wilson will train on, for he is painstaking; Mr. S. H. Day was as attractive as any amateur bat of last season; whilst Mr. Moon and Mr. Daniell are good. The secretary, Mr. E. F. Penn, may be absent on military duty. Of the Seniors, Mr. R. N. R. Blaker, the Old Westminster skipper, has the best chance, but Mr. Ffrench merits a trial, and in the present paucity of bowlers, the claims of Mr. Grylls, the Rugbeian, are sure to be considered, although he is erratic.

At Lords the University match is fixed for July 2, and Eton *v.* Harrow on July 13, whilst the Gentlemen oppose the Players on July 16. The West Indians play at headquarters, and their match against the South Africans would have been especially interesting. Flowers retires from the bowling staff of the M.C.C., whilst additional to those engaged last year are Relf (Norfolk), Burrows (Gloucestershire), Cox (Sussex), and Thompson (Northants). The premier Club encounters a majority of the first-class counties, though these matches are not treated so seriously as of yore, and might afford an opportunity for experiments in cricket reform.

The Press Box is to be moved from its present position to the north side of the large Mound Stand, so that it will be almost behind the wicket at the Nursery end of the ground, a position which should give that admirable force, the reporting staff, a far better post of observation. A clock tower is in course of erection on the west side of the new bowlers' room, and the post and telegraph offices will be moved to this building, adjacent to the practice ground. A certain number of season tickets at £1 each are to be issued to reserved seats on the mound. Theoretically this should prove a welcome boon, recalling the old times when for the sum of one guinea a reserved seat could be purchased in the Grand Stand for the entire season. But the privilege is now to be restricted to members of the club and to candidates entered on the M.C.C. books prior to 1900. It is certainly astounding that a member of a non-proprietary club, if he wishes to occupy a seat on the

club property other than in the pavilion, should have to pay for it in addition to his subscription. Another anachronism is that no member can obtain a mutton chop or a steak after half-past one in the club refreshment pavilion, although the committee promised every reform when they took over the refreshments two or three years ago.

It seems a pity that neither Lord Hawke nor Mr. R. S. Lucas could have collected an eleven of cricketers who had visited the West Indies to oppose their representatives here. Messrs. A. E. Stoddart, S. M. J. Woods, R. C. N. Palairet, H. R. Bromley-Davenport, P. F. Warner, C. C. Stone, H. D. G. Leveson-Gower and G. R. Bardswell might have been invited. In the opinion of so eminent a cricketer as Mr. P. F. Warner, English crowds will receive a lesson in fielding from the West Indians, who are said to be marvellously alert in this department. Mr. L. Constantine will be found a capital wicket-keeper. Learmond, one of the coloured members of the team, is a very good bat judged by English standards. Woods of Trinidad, their champion bowler, is also a black. His bowling is curious, for he only takes three steps and then delivers a fast and somewhat deceptive ball. Ulignon of Grenada is a slower bowler, who varies his pitch with ability. Mr. P. A. Godman is regarded as one of the best short slips, and Olivierre will be valuable all round. Another coloured player of whom much is expected is Burton. It will be remembered that an aboriginal team of Australians, all blacks, toured in England in 1868, one man, Mullagh, making 75 and taking 3 wickets for 19 *v.* M.C.C., who won by 55 runs. It is to be hoped that the play of our West Indian visitors will not be adversely affected by the difference of light. They will have a fine tour, and must be a pretty smart lot if they are to hold their own against the elevens they have to encounter. At least they will find a hearty and cordial welcome to the Old Country.

A DAY IN A HIGHLAND DEER-FOREST

BY THE HON. E. CADOGAN

THE description of a day's stalking in the Highlands of Scotland presents a great difficulty in that it is a subject hard to vary, the story of one day on the hill is very much like another. But it is not so in reality. More variety, I may say, attaches to this sport than to any other. I have heard one who has had an intimate knowledge of stalking most of his life affirm that, even after abundant experience, he never spent a day on the hill in which there was not something new to be learned.

It is a sport where, more than any other, experience teaches, and it indeed requires a great deal more than that which the writer at present possesses to give an adequate account of a day on the hillside in Scotland. Humbly, then, craving the indulgence and forbearance of those of my readers who possess a knowledge derived from a life-long study of the sport, I will endeavour to write a short description of one out of many such days, which I shall always consider the happiest of my existence.

It is on one of those bright September mornings that generally give promise of sport, that we start away from the small shooting lodge which commands one of the finest views in Scotland. It is situated upon a promontory, nestling among a clump of dark fir trees, up at the far end of the loch, sur-

rounded by great heather-clad hills which almost entirely close in the view except where the loch, shimmering in the morning sun, winds and curves through the narrow glen. And it is by the side of the loch that we now proceed on rough Highland ponies along the beaten track, vigorous and hopeful. Leisurely we mark the bloom on the heather, the great expanse of water reflecting the fresh bracken, the graceful silver trunks of the birch trees, and the glorious deep shades of the fir woods. High up an eagle is soaring on her early flight. Quietly

GOING DOWN TO OUR BEAST

feeding on the side of a hill you observe some hinds looking like small brown specks against a large patch of fresh grass. But they pay no attention to us as we proceed on our way. We cross a rushing brown torrent and soon arrive at the stalker's trim little stone cottage, where he is waiting for us with the gillies. He thinks well of the wind and the weather, so, having dismounted, we follow him up across a peat bog and on to the first heathery knoll.

Here we seat ourselves and spy the hill which faces us. There are some deer very high up, and my inexperienced eye cannot compete with that of Donald, who informs me they are 'shootable beasts.'

He closes his glasses with that gesture which never fails to

express satisfaction, and then we begin our climb. Before starting, however, he explains to me that he is rather afraid they are just in the 'sanctuary' and consequently just off his beat. I have always noticed that stalkers very rightly never take their 'gentlemen' up to a stag which is only just over the boundary of their own particular beat.

However, Donald decides on the whole that the stags are on legitimate ground for the stalk. The rifle is then taken out

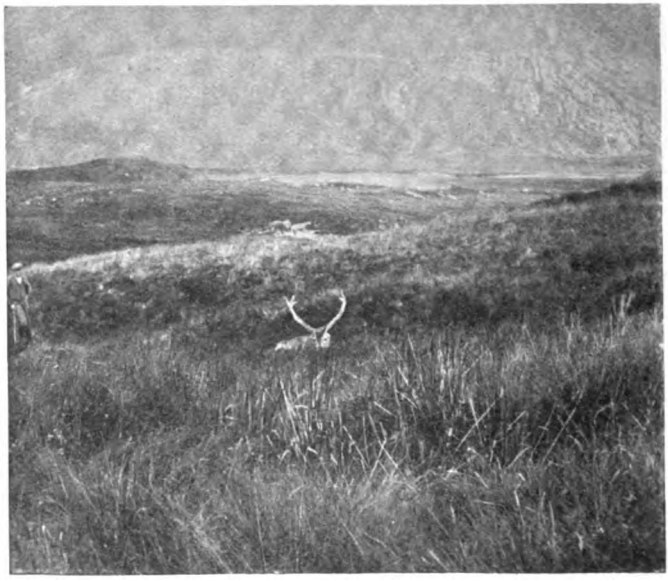
HEADING HIM OFF FROM THE BURN

of the case and the barrels are found to be choked up. This accident had happened by the case becoming filled with dirt, as the flap of the cover was left open during our crawl in the heather. Sundry epithets having been applied to people who had nothing to do with the misfortune, we remedy the evil by dint of patience and trouble, during which operation time moves on as well as the deer.

Again we proceed up a desperate steep shoulder of the hill. When we reach the top a glorious view meets the eye. For a minute we stop and rest to drink in the pleasure of the situation. Donald points out to me the historic peaks of many famous forests. In the far distance we can see the blue hills of Skye,

and even the great Atlantic itself glistening in the sunlight. The delight of such a view on such a day is indescribable. There is not too much time, however, to waste in admiring the scene, and now we have to proceed more cautiously. Suddenly we are obliged to lie down flat and unfortunately in the wettest spot imaginable.

Our quick movement is caused by the appearance of an old hind who considerably resents our intrusion. I have often seen a hind stare for a long time, but I never saw one so determined



BREATHING HIS LAST

'to make us out,' with those great ears pricked, perfectly motionless, gazing as if her life depends upon it. Perhaps, indeed, she thinks it does, or at any rate that of her antlered lord, who we trust is feeding quietly on beyond. It is touch and go which way she will turn. Suddenly, with a loud bark, she is down into the corry below, and we breathe again.

On we stumble to the next shoulder, on the other side of which we expect to see the stags, and we are not disappointed. There they are all lying down. Donald points me out my beast and here we remain waiting the stag's pleasure to rise from his siesta, ensconced as he is in a bed of heather. We notice to our horror that the wind is beginning to play us false. There is nothing for it but to start a crawl in full view. Suddenly

A MINUTE INSPECTION

up go all their heads, in a second they are all standing, but

THE FALLEN MONARCH

during that second I seize the rifle from Donald's trembling

hand, and although the stag is not presenting a good broadside shot, I fire. He rolls over, but is up again in a minute. He cannot, however, keep up with the rest of the herd, so betakes himself as quick as his wound will allow him down into the corry below. Donald shouts to the gillie to rush down and head him off from the big burn which runs over its stony causeway below us. He just reaches the river in time. There

'THE FINAL RITES'

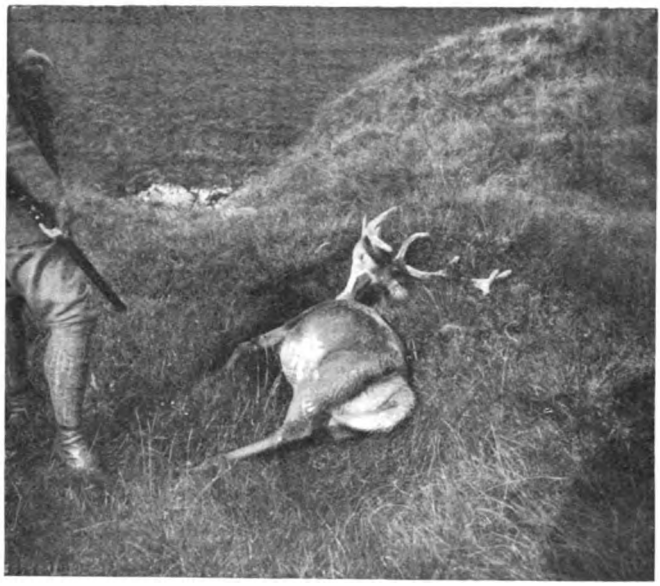
stands the wounded beast defiant, contemplating a charge at the gillie.

By this time we are close up to him and see that he is hit high up in the foreleg. Presently he lies down, but at our approach is up again and warns us with a vicious sweep of his horn that there is life in him yet. But he loses strength every minute, and it is now a piteous sight to see his eyes starting from his head with exhaustion and pain. Once more he gets up with a look of defiance and again confronts us, then he falls never to rise again. A minute inspection of the fallen monarch shows us that he is a fine beast with the velvet still on his horn. He has got a 'grand body' as Donald expresses it and will make a fine show in my host's larder. The final rites I do not consider it my duty to attend, so having eaten a late lunch, for it is already getting dusk, I scramble down to the pathway

and retrace my steps to the stalker's house, where I find my pony.

What a pleasant ride home it is up the glen in the twilight, the great black hills rising on all sides! What pleasant thoughts fill your mind as you return home to the lodge, priding yourself on a real good day's sport!

The memory of such a day as this is ever filled with delight,



A LAST LOOK

and it cannot fail to brighten our thoughts when we reach that time of life when, as Mr. Grimble so aptly describes it 'anno domini may have you in his clutches, when the hill may no longer be climbed, when the spy-glass and rifle have ceased to do active service, and are kept but to be looked at.'

A PRIZE COMPETITION

THE Proprietors of the *Badminton Magazine* offer a prize of Ten Guineas each month for the best original photograph sent in representing any sporting subject. Ten other prizes will also be given away each month, each of them consisting of an original drawing by one or other of the artists who illustrate the Magazine. Good clear pictures are of course necessary, and when possible the negative should be sent as well as the print. Competitors may also send any photographs they have by them on two conditions: that they have been taken by the sender, and that they have never been previously published. A few lines explaining when and where the photographs were taken should accompany each negative. Residents in the country who have access to shooting parties, or who chance to be in the neighbourhood when hounds are running, will doubtless find interesting subjects, and these will also be provided at football or cricket matches, wherever golf, cycling, fishing, skating, polo, athletics are practised. Racing and steeplechasing, including Hunt Meetings and Point-to-point contests, should also supply excellent material. All matters of public school interest will be welcome.

THE FEBRUARY COMPETITION

The first prize has been awarded to Mr. Edward Cadogan, whose photographs appear in this number.

Creditable work has also been received from Mrs. Delves Broughton, Messrs. G. Christopher Davies and R. Goodfellow, Miss Mabel M. Thomson, and others, to whom drawings have been sent.

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

I AM writing the day after the sale of Flying Fox, excitement about which will, of course, have considerably diminished before these Notes appear. It is always rash to endeavour to foretell the future, but it really does seem improbable that the sum of 37,500 guineas, paid for him, will ever be exceeded. We used to think that enormous prices were reached at some of the Newmarket yearling sales a few seasons ago. Quite a sensation was created by the sum paid for Lady Stamford's five Barcaldine colts and fillies, 5670 guineas; and the Blankney totals made on the Thursdays of the First July used to be spoken of with awe. Five yearlings on one occasion made 4480 guineas; the season before nine had totalled up to exactly 10,000 guineas. Later on there were the much bigger sales of La Flêche for 5500 guineas and of Childwick for 6000; for older horses 20,000 had been given and more offered; but the events of March 8 this year throw everything else into the shade. Thirty-seven thousand five hundred guineas is £40,000 less only £625. I am not an expert at figures, but it would be rather interesting to know how much a pound this comes to—certainly horse flesh has never been sold at such a price before, and as just suggested, I don't suppose it ever will be again.

It is very unfortunate that the horse should have been bought by a foreigner, and that, as I suppose we must assume,

his services will not be obtainable for England. M. Blanc can afford these luxuries, and I suppose he will keep the horse strictly for himself as the owner of Le Sancy keeps that sire; for it is quite impossible to obtain a nomination to this good grey. It had been hoped that the present Duke of Westminster would not have let the horse go, and the hope seemed reasonable because it can be made out that his value is quite what was given for him. Commenting on the sale last month I wrote: 'I will not go into figures to show how I calculate the worth of Flying Fox, even with the drawback of a heavy insurance on him, but I fully expect him to fetch over 30,000 guineas,' so I need not say that I was not surprised at the result. Such a horse ought to be at such a stud as Eaton, and the French, who have well held their own against us for a good many years past, are likely to do so still more decisively by the aid of Flying Fox if all goes well with him. Sad as it is that he should be expatriated, I believe M. Blanc to be a good sportsman, and I am not sure that the horse may not be more satisfactorily placed with him than he would have been if bought by a commercial syndicate, as was once threatened, consisting of wealthy Richard, plutocratic Thomas, and opulent Henry.

What was Flying Fox worth exactly a year ago? It is rather curious to reflect on this in the face of the £40,000 he so lately made. He had won the Criterion Plate at the Newmarket October meeting, but his superiority to St. Gris was estimated as so slight that, meeting as they did at even weights, 2 to 1 was laid against the son of Orme and Vampire and 11 to 4 against Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's colt. This looks a desperately long way from £40,000; and yet the odds seemed perfectly justified, for in the Imperial Produce Stakes at Kempton St. Gris, 9 st. 5 lb., had beaten Flying Fox, 9 st. 10 lb., a short head, with Fascination, 9 st. 7 lb., only three-quarters of a length behind; and a week later Caiman, 9 st., had beaten Flying Fox, 9 st. 3 lb., a length and a half in the Middle Park Plate. Previously, at Stockbridge, Flying Fox, 9 st. 5 lb., finished only one length in front of No Trumps, 8 st. 8 lb., and though the Kingsclere horse won easily, that was only 8 lbs. more than weight for age. When he made his first appearance in the New Stakes at Ascot, again, Musa was only three-quarters of a length behind him, and the finish was vigorously fought out.

There was certainly nothing wonderful about all this, but between two and three years old there is no doubt that Flying Fox made wonderful improvement, and moreover he continued to improve throughout the year, for, in the St. Leger, though it has been urged that he had nothing to beat, one of the 'nothings' was Caiman aforesaid, about whom very shrewd people were content to take 4 to 1, and another nothing was Scintillant, who after all was not such a bad horse when he gave his running, as he did at Doncaster. Before this Note is published we shall perhaps know whether M. Blanc proposes to run him in the Ascot Cup and also whether Mornington Cannon will be available; for it is just possible that if the colt were ridden by a jockey who did not understand him the result might be a little startling. How Flying Fox goes when he is once set going we all know, but it is impossible to forget his mule-like behaviour on more than one occasion—at Doncaster for example. I believe, also, it is true that sometimes he declined to move at exercise on his own Downs; so that if M. Blanc intends to win the Cup it seems very desirable that he should secure the jockey who knows him.

Flat racing will have begun before this number is published, and discussion will be rife as to the animal whose name is likely to follow that of Flying Fox in the list of Two Thousand Guineas and Derby winners. Has any of the present three-year-olds, one wonders, come on as Flying Fox did? Of course, on form, Democrat, Diamond Jubilee, and Forfarshire 'stand out,' and I suppose if there were any betting, bookmakers would want to take a shade of odds on these three against the field. It will not surprise me, however, if in the course of the next few weeks some other animals are much talked about. There did not seem to be great room for improvement in Democrat. Diamond Jubilee's performances do not look remarkable when they are analysed, for in six attempts he only won a single race, and that by the shortest of short heads, from Paigle, to whom he was giving no more than 3 lb., and the chance of his ugly disposition asserting itself is not to be disregarded, charming as are the stories of his placid and equable behaviour at home. Forfarshire is considered not a little flash by good judges, and there is always the doubt as to whether he will stay, a doubt which extends to all three-year-olds at the beginning of the season. I well remember how it was asserted a few years ago that there could be no sort of doubt in this respect about

Le Nord, because of the style in which he had won the Dewhurst Plate over the severe seven furlongs of the Rowley Mile; but next year Le Nord showed that there was no doubt about his staying from the opposite point of view—a mile was quite his limit. At this time of year, however, the subject of the three-year-olds is not ripe for discussion.

The Grand National will be run just about the time that this number appears. Possibly the race will be over, but in any case so much is likely to happen during the next few critical weeks that it would be useless now to go into the subject, and if I were to say I thought 12 st. rather more than Hidden Mystery was likely to carry with success, it might have been proved that my judgment was wrong. I write on the eve of the National Hunt Steeplechase, with regard to which event it may be said that the conditions really appear ridiculous, and surely before it comes round again they might be re-considered by the National Hunt Committee? I happen to know that several of these gentlemen cordially agree with my view. The race, as readers are probably aware, is 'for horses of all denominations that at the time of starting have never won any steeplechase or hurdle race or any description of flat race,' and whilst these conditions exist it is not in the least likely that good animals will be attracted, for the simple reason that owners will not keep them on the off-chance. One or two good horses, that for some reason or another have never won a race, *may* be included in the entry, but what is the good of collecting a field in which the qualification of the greater number is that they have been consistently beaten? I have asked some of my friends on the Committee why the conditions are retained, and gather that it is because one or two good old sportsmen, who do not realise how (perhaps unfortunately) times have changed, obstructively reply, when the question is broached, that the conditions always have been those which still exist, and that a good many years ago there were some interesting races. There may have been. It is a tradition of the event that Baron Rothschild was as anxious to win this race in 1870 as he was to win the Derby, and that the present Governor-General of Canada, Lord Minto, who thirty years ago used to ride a great deal under the name of 'Mr. Rolly,' devoted himself for weeks to the task of riding Ledburn in his exercise at Mentmore with a view to winning—which he failed

to do, not only because Mr. J. M. Richardson and Schiedam were in the way, but because the horse ran badly all through the struggle. Nothing of that sort happens now, and it would be an excellent thing if before another year comes round the National Hunt Committee invented a more reasonable race.

A correspondent who evidently knows what he is saying very kindly writes to me : 'On page 257 of the March number of the *Badminton Magazine*, you write that "no horse ever won the great Liverpool race the first time he essayed that severe task" before Voluptuary. Alcibiade, 5 years, 11 st. 5 lb., had never started in a steeplechase before he won the Liverpool in 1865. His owner, the late Mr. Angell, had, however, two good horses in his stable, Bridegroom and Queensferry, at the time—and some good friends too, for four of them won £29,700 on the race, and the horse even then started at twenty to one.' This is a very interesting little fact, and I thank my correspondent.

Lord Granby's article on previous pages will doubtless, now that guns and cartridge cases are put by, set men who shoot to the pleasant task of recalling good days. One of the puzzles with regard to sport is why an average shot sometimes finds that he can hardly miss and at other times that he can hit nothing. Of course, one may be out of sorts, some functional derangement may interfere with the keenness of the eye or the steadiness of the hand, nerves have a great deal to answer for ; but not seldom a man goes out feeling thoroughly fit and well, and yet blazes off time after time—just the sort of shots at which he fancies himself—I would not say without touching a feather, but with a melancholy proportion of cartridges to kills ; a good many of the birds he hits, moreover, being not knocked over in clean, good style, but wounded so that they flutter down and kick, or run, or do something that makes him feel very uncomfortable. Sometimes one stands back in the second line where the birds come high and fast, and it seems impossible to miss. Up goes the gun, down comes the bird, dead before it reaches the ground, and lies motionless ; or you may be in what has struck you as rather a bad position partridge driving, and yet time after time the little brown birds 'fly into it,' you get two or three you have hardly hoped for, and few escape. If it were

merely a question of whether one felt really well or not, the thing would be simple; but I fancy the experience I have described affects all but the little knot of practically infallible shots, such men as Lord de Grey, Lord Walsingham, Mr. A. Stuart Wortley, and a very few others whose accuracy is almost machine-like. And even some of these are not always at their best.

I want to say a word to readers who are also contributors. About December I frequently get articles accompanied by letters saying that 'now when skating seems likely to be possible' a paper on such and such a subject may be acceptable, or in the middle of April a little essay reaches me with a note from the author remarking that 'the cricket season being at hand' he has written something which he thinks would be seasonable. As a matter of fact the greater part of the contents of each number is necessarily decided upon at least some three months in advance, and this for the reason that artists and engravers must have sufficient time allowed them to do their work in. Before the middle of each month the next number is invariably in the printer's hands; the last pages containing these Notes cannot be squeezed in after the 11th or 12th, so that a 'seasonable' article cannot appear at a seasonable time unless it reaches me a good many weeks before the date at which the author desires it to be published.

The Badminton Magazine

A CHANCE MOUNT

BY C. C. MOTT

I WAS hard hit. There was no doubt of it, and yet it was not for want of warnings. Johnnie Blake never ceased to tell me to let the illegitimate game alone.

'Even if you win,' was his pet remark, 'prices are so confoundedly cramped in steeplechases, that you don't do any good.'

But it wasn't much use to warn me ; the Ainslie money had been lost and won over 'chasers since the thirties, the days of Lottery and Moonraker ; and I continued to entrust my share of it to all sorts of horses over all sorts of courses. This was about three years ago and I was a first-class 'mug' in those days.

As often as I could screw some leave out of the Colonel, I went from one jump meeting to another. Mine happened to be rather a popular regiment, and I seldom failed to meet an acquaintance or two in the paddock. Guests at our mess were plentiful and various, but most of them good fellows, and *all* of them with a certainty for the punting 'sub.' When these well-meant schemes for my benefit collapsed—as they generally did —I had to listen to 'Oh, I'm *awfully* sorry, old chap, but I can

assure you they told me it couldn't lose; they made out it represented Manifesto at about 10 st. 7 lb.!' Crumbs of comfort these, unsatisfying at the best of times; absolutely useless in view of the following Monday.

Various unhappy chances, various errors of judgment—sometimes other people's judgment, sometimes mine—brought me, about the end of March, to a point where a big effort to pull things straight was urgent. I had tapped my father repeatedly with some success, and felt I was reaching the end of the dear old fellow's generosity. I did not wish to exchange my profession for a hansom cab or a sporting journal—both respectable methods of making a living, no doubt, and possibly more lucrative than the Army, but I preferred the Service.

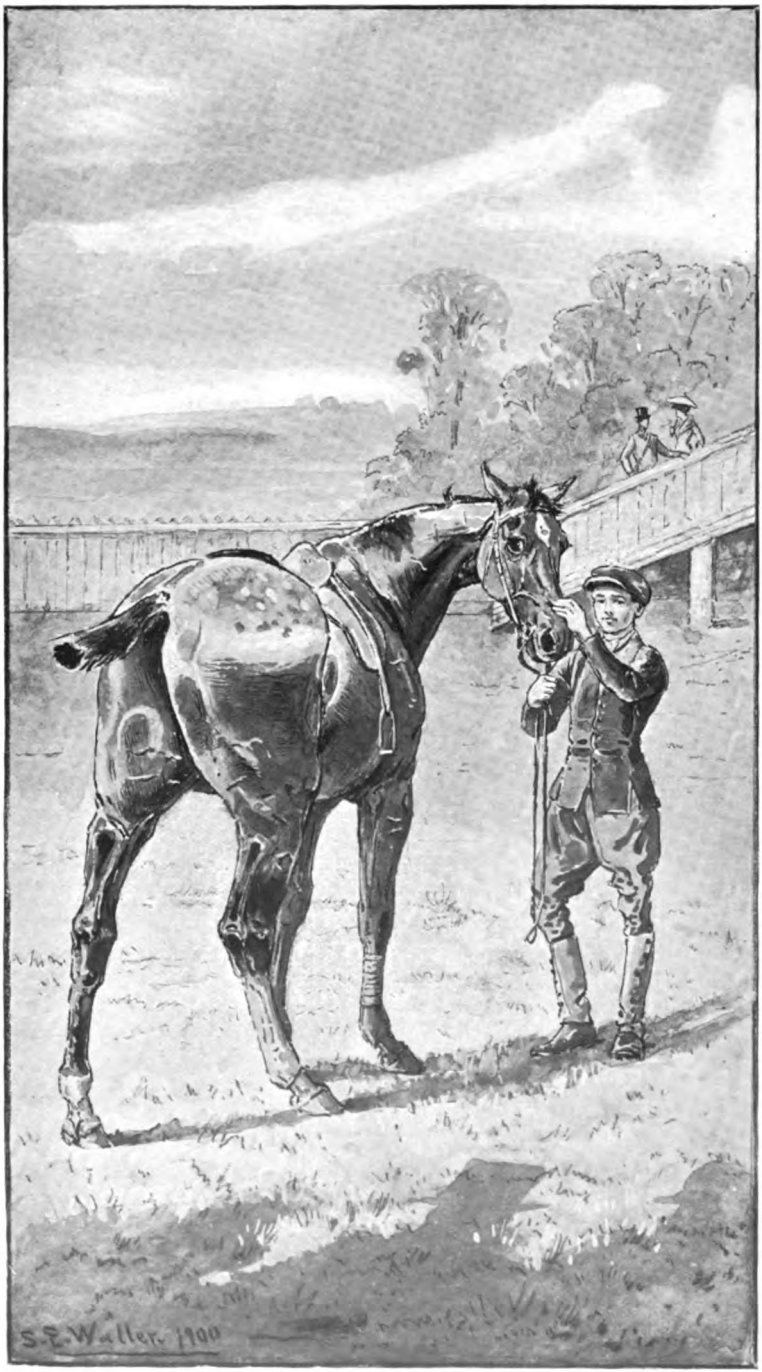
Besides, I was 'hard hit' in two places, so to speak. I wanted to 'settle up' as soon as possible, and after that—well! to settle down. A lanky subaltern, hampered with racing debts, was scarcely a very brilliant suitor for Mary, only daughter of Sir George Twistleton, Bart., but luckily the latter did not dislike me. I daresay he had a fine contempt for my ideas about racing—he was himself a remarkably shrewd and cool old sportsman—but he permitted me an intimacy with his daughter Molly which I hope I never abused.

I had first met my lady-love while watching the sale of a wretched selling hurdle race winner at Langford Park. In the illegitimate season there is seldom more than one Mecca for the devotee of the turf, and on most of my racing pilgrimages I met Molly with her father. Our intimacy prospered among the yells of the bookmakers and the whistle of the scudding silks. Molly was excellent company, gay and straightforward, a sportswoman and a lady. For a girl she was well up in racing matters, but she never showed off by swagger or slang. She was fond of horses, and not above enjoying the excitement of winning a little money.

'I promised Dad not to risk more than I ought, you know,' she said. 'He advises me generally, but sometimes I back my own fancy, just for the fun of the thing!'

For this reason, I suppose, she backed some of my 'certainties': as a rule they promptly went down, and I was very humble and apologetic. I dare say my remarks were no more consoling than those of *my* sporting comforters in a similar case; but she forgave me, and sat out several squares with me at a dance that night just to show there was no ill-feeling.

Molly was a bright particular star—very particular—and



THE SALE OF A WRETCHED SELLING HURDLE RACER

she governed several satellites ; I was a newly discovered one—but many of them were condemned to circle round her at a distance and never get any closer. My orbit was a nearer one ; I had revolved contentedly in it for some months, but now I was threatened with eclipse. Floundering among these starry metaphors, let me return to unaspiring prose.

His name was Vexton, he was a very clever fellow, and obviously admired Molly, though it was not obvious that his feelings went beyond admiration. A man who makes money by racing learns the value of reticence with regard to many things.

Vexton owned a small string of 'chasers that had the knack of winning at good prices. His enemies might wink and whisper (and envy), putting the worst construction on these welcome victories, but I am certain that Vexton never went in for any hanky-panky of a base sort. To be liked by Molly and by Molly's father was a very fair guarantee, indeed, of a man's honesty. Of course Molly enjoyed her double conquest, much, perhaps, as we enjoy bringing off a 'right and left.' I was in a condition to detect a rival in any man outside the Table of Kindred and Affinity ; but I hoped Captain Vexton was merely a copious and trustworthy 'Racing Guide' to Molly, who, I winced in remembering, had lost the 'price of several new frocks,' as she said, over some of my wild fancies.

Molly must have guessed—woman's instinct, I suppose—that things were not going well with me ; she too had suffered, poor girl, over some of the 'things.'

On the first day at Liverpool we were watching the opening race from the top of the Stand. Molly's eyes were very bright and her tan racing-coat became her to perfection. She had rather a mysterious little air about her which was explained when she presently began in a confidential undertone :

'Captain Vexton's going to ride Peg the Rake in the 3.30 race.'

'That's his own, isn't it ?' I said.

'Yes. He says he's going to win. He told me about it coming up in the train.'

'Oh, he came up with you ?' I said savagely.

'Yes,' said Molly, now busy with her race-glasses. 'Can you get something on for me, do you think, Mr. Ainslie ? I think I'll have a little plunge this time. Captain Vexton doesn't often ride his own gees, but his usual jockey's got influenza. He says it's a real good thing—the race, not the influenza. He *does* ride well,' she finished enthusiastically.

'I hope he will, as he's going to ride for *your* money,' I said. '*I'd* try and win, I know. I'd like to have Vexton's chance.'

'Perhaps you'd tumble off,' said Molly seriously.

'Probably I should. I've only ridden in regimental point-to-point races, and in a "plodders' race" at Campion Hill—never over a course like this. But I shouldn't mind having a try. Would you come and watch me tumble into Becher's Brook?'

'I shouldn't like to see you come to grief.'

'I don't believe you'd care twopence,' I remarked.

'I should!' said Molly; 'do you think I should have no more than twopence on you?'

She put up her glasses as the horses came into the straight; I thought her cheeks were rather pink, but that may have been excitement at the prospect of a close finish. Sir George and some more friends joined us just then, and it was not till Molly was walking with me to lunch in our tent—the 116th were then quartered at Preston—that she again mentioned Captain Vexton's tip.

'He feels certain of winning,' she said. 'If you *can* afford a little extra, I *do* think it would be a safe thing.' She was quite eager about it, and as I looked at her, blushed and began to hunt for her race card. I knew it was in her left-hand pocket, and I believe *she* did, but she searched with energy in all the others first.

'And he told me,' she went on meanwhile, 'that Drogheda is the one to back for the National to-morrow. Very few people are "in the know," as he calls it, and you can get 25 to 1 about him now. [Molly's pronouns were a little mixed in the excitement of the moment.] He has an Irish racing friend, I think, who told him that——' and she gave me a good deal of Vexton's private and exclusive information. It seemed rather rash of Vexton to have told her, and I drew my own conclusions. But I was fairly sure that his tip would be a sound one, and later on I took my courage in both hands and £2500 to £100 against Drogheda.

The 3.30 race—Vexton's race—was a steeplechase, distance about three miles. There were three runners—Landslip, who was immediately made a hot favourite, Scottish Pride, and Peg the Rake, against whom they were offering 7 or 8 to 1. I did Molly's little commission and my own, and hurried off to join her. She and Sir George were posted by a fence on

the railway side, Molly liking, as she said, to 'see the jumping close to.'

On leaving the paddock, the favourite bolted, jumped the rails, and lamed himself. So, 'by permission of the Stewards,' his number was withdrawn. The race was now reduced to a match, and the bookies to a state of confusion and disgust. Molly and I, like brave Alum Bey, hugged ourselves in the comfortable conviction that '*we* were all right.'

The flag fell. Peg and Scottish Pride came along close together for the first mile, and jumped the fence beside us nearly level.

'She's a very good mare, Vexton's,' said Sir George. 'I should think—by Jove, she's down!'

Peg was leading slightly as she and Scottish Pride neared the next fence—the one with a six-foot ditch, and a thorn hedge on the far side of it. I thought they were over all right. Suddenly—it gave me a sickening sensation—Vexton's yellow sleeves disappeared from view.

We watched for a second or two in silence, hoping to see Peg remounted. Meanwhile Scottish Pride went striding on alone.

'He's not up,' said Sir George. 'Ainslie, you'd better go and see what's the matter.'

I found Vexton sitting on somebody's outspread coat, looking shaken and queer, surrounded by a group of more or less disinterested sympathisers. Some one was holding the mare, who appeared none the worse. I could see that Vexton was in a good deal of pain, though he was trying to make light of it.

'Whereabouts are you hurt, old man?' I asked.

'My left knee,' he said. 'I'm afraid I can't get up again. It's deuced bad luck. I'm awfully sorry about the race.'

'There won't be no race, Capting, if this goes on,' said a bystander who was looking through his glasses. I looked in the same direction and saw what he meant.

Scottish Pride's jockey, having the affair to himself after Vexton's cropper, had considerably eased his mount, who —perhaps for want of an encouraging lead—was now repeatedly refusing Becher's. It seemed as if this unlucky race were never to be ridden to a finish.

The crowd kept up a withering fire of comment.

'Take 'em a week!' said one.

'Finish next year!' said a second.

'Not they,' came a chorus.

'Bets'll all be orf,' said some one who had probably backed Peg, and some one else rejoined morosely,

'A good job too! They ought to put up proper jocks to ride for folks' money.'

I hurriedly explained the state of things to Vexton when we had got him on to a hurdle.

'It's an awful nuisance that I can't finish,' he said, dismally; 'the mare's not hurt, is she?'

'No, she's all right,' I said, blankly enough, and then a sudden and desperate inspiration seized me. I said something *sotto voce* to Vexton.

'Could you, do you think?' he said, doubtfully.

'I can draw the weight, I fancy, and I'm qualified, anyhow,' I answered. 'I'll try, if you'll give me leave. It looks as if it would only be a ride over.'

Vexton looked ahead where Scottish Pride was still obstinately swerving and wheeling, looked back at me, and seemed to consider.

'All right!' he said, laconically.

I gave my race-glasses to a bystander (by-the-way, I never saw them again), threw off my overcoat, crammed on my bowler, and was shot up into Peg's saddle by a couple of willing helpers. I had hardly time to realise what I was in for, but I sent Peg at the next fence, and promptly discovered what strenuous demands were to be made on my equitation.

Peg the Rake was a beautiful jumper, and I accomplished the next two fences—which luckily were not Aintree's largest—with no further mishap than the loss of my hat. That, too, I never saw again.

I was now in the same field with Scottish Pride who was still coquetting with Becher's. When my opponent, warned by the cries of the crowd near the jump, saw me coming on, he brought his mount back so as to get a lead from me. The horrid thought flashed through me that if Peg cleared the brook perhaps Scottish Pride would do so likewise, and thenceforward I should have let myself in for a racing tussle, whereas I had merely bargained for a ride-over on the dubious supposition that I could 'get the country.'

But before I had time to wonder how my (very elementary) finishing powers would serve me in that case, Peg rose at the fence and brook—I thought she was never coming down again—and landed without a mistake. I risked a look behind me

WITH NO FURTHER MISHAP THAN THE LOSS OF MY HAT

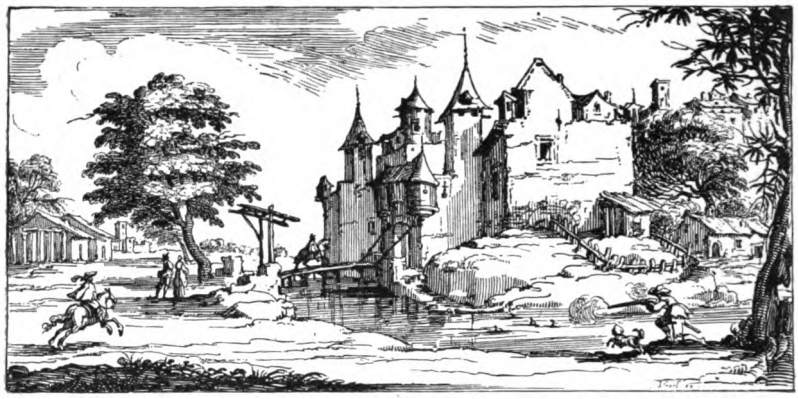
to see Scottish Pride swinging away from the brook once again; and the jeers of the crowd were like music in my ears.

By good luck, and thanks to Peg's jumping powers, I accomplished the rest of the course, and passed the winning-post alone, to the accompaniment of a good deal of cheering from the ring.

I drew the weight correctly, with a good bit to spare, and had the satisfaction of hearing 'All right' called. I don't know if any one grumbled; I should think not, for No. 170 of the National Hunt Rules is too definite to dispute.

So Molly and I won our money. And—as the Racing Calendar will tell you—Drogheda rolled home in the National next day, to the great relief of my embarrassed finances. The sporting papers dwelt flatteringly on 'the young Lieutenant's pluck'; but the unpublished remarks of one amateur were worth more to me than even the printed praise of racing experts.

Mrs. Ainslie is even prettier than Miss Twistleton used to be, I think, and just as keen on racing. Vexton's stable has had quite a little run of luck this season; and Molly and I, not long ago, watched him win a most exciting close finish at Sandown. I think he was rather hard hit, though Molly denies it. But if he was, he managed—as I did at Becher's Brook—to get over it somehow!



ON A CAPE LAKE WITH A SHOTGUN

BY HENDRIK B. KNOBLAUCH

'No!' exclaimed our host, 'until that night Oom Jan would have called his best friend a born fool to his face had he dared to assert in Oom Jan's presence that it was possible for such a thing as a ghost to exist. You know, Oom Jan had himself been mistaken for a spook once in broad daylight, and that under circumstances which ever afterwards caused the very mention of a ghost to have the same effect upon Oom Jan as the waving of a red rag has upon an angry bull. Oom Jan's twin brother Frikkie had been the very image of Oom Jan—the same red nose, the same bald head, the same ragged grey beard, the same voice, and the same stoop in the saddle. He dressed exactly like Oom Jan, too, and had Oom Jan's habit of every now and again taking his large red cotton handkerchief from under his hat and wiping the perspiration from the top of his bald head with it when the sun was hot. When Oom Frikkie died he left his farm and his pony to Oom Jan. You remember the old horse, Neef Gert—a white legged chestnut with a sort of cross-bred gait between that of a camel and a kangaroo.

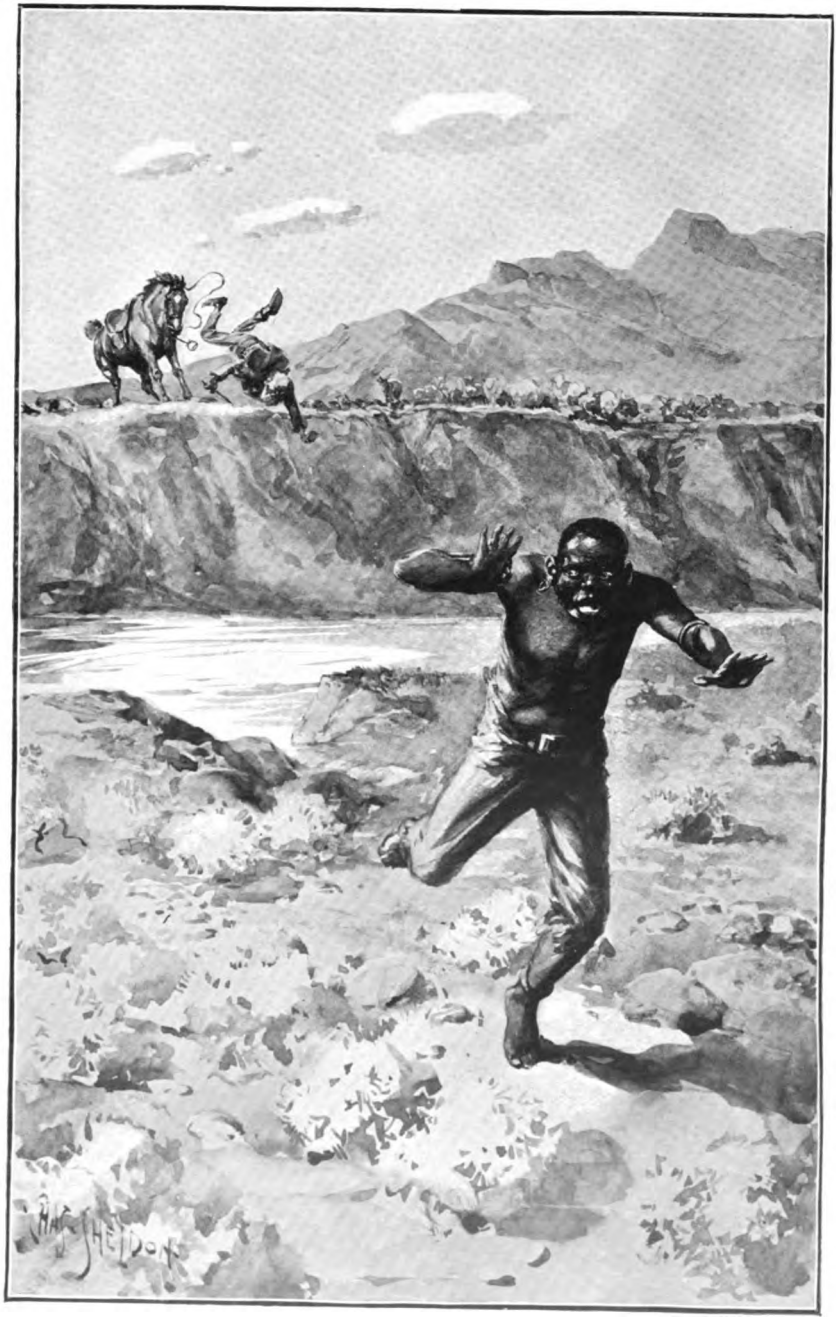
Some time before his death Oom Frikkie had engaged a Hottentot boy—Karkar was his name—as shepherd. This boy was stationed at an outlying post with his flock and had never seen Oom Jan, although Oom Jan and Karkar had both

attended Oom Frikkie's funeral. The day after the funeral Oom Jan, mounted on the pony he had just inherited, was making the round of the farm to see how things were getting on. He knew Karkar by sight; but, as I have said, Karkar had not the slightest inkling of what his new master was like. A couple of miles from the homestead Oom Jan crossed a ridge and came upon Karkar's flock of sheep and goats grazing among the rhinoceros-bush. The shepherd himself was sitting on an ant heap close to the edge of a ravine, some three hundred yards from the ridge. His back was turned to Oom Jan, of whose approach he was unaware. Oom Jan stopped his horse and sang out, 'Kar-k-a-r-r!' in exactly the same tone of voice Oom Frikkie had so often employed when hailing the boy. Karkar heard the voice calling him, and gave a jump as though he had received an electric shock. 'Kar-k-a-r-r!!' sang out Oom Jan again, a little louder than before. Oom Jan was short-tempered and did not like being kept waiting by a Hottentot. The shepherd gave another jump, waltzed round, but did not stir a step in Oom Jan's direction. The flock of eight hundred sheep was between him and Oom Jan, or else the latter would certainly have been up with the electrified nigger before you could have counted ten. 'Kar-k-a-r-r-r!!!' now wrathfully shouted Oom Jan a third time, and, the sun being blazing hot, he lifted his hat, took out the red handkerchief just like Oom Frikkie used to do, and wiped the dew from his shiny cranium. This was too much for Karkar. '*Allamachtag! that's old Baas Frikkie's ghost!*' said he, and the next moment he was over the ten-foot cliff, fell with a splash into the salt water below, struggled up the other side, and was running like the very wind across the dry karroo flats beyond. Wheeling sharply round, Oom Jan struck his spurs into the pony's flanks and galloped forward at racecourse speed to try and intercept Karkar's mad career. When Oom Jan reached the edge of the cliff, the pony came to a dead stop and sent Oom Jan spinning over his head into the muddy salt water in the ravine. Spluttering and speechless with rage, the old man crawled out, and with the aid of whip and spur forced his steed across at an opening in the rocks a little lower down. And now he rapidly began to gain on Karkar. The old pony was entering into the excitement of the thing, and Karkar was evidently out of practice. Once or twice Oom Jan shouted, 'Stop, Kar-k-a-r-r! Where in the nation are you running to?' But the more Oom Jan shouted the harder ran Karkar. At last, just as Oom Jan was on the point of running down the

fugitive, Karkar spied an *ertvark* hole straight before him and vanished into it like lightning. Oom Jan was too stout to creep into the narrow opening, or he would assuredly have done so. He wanted to plug the hole with green bushes and smoke Karkar out; but not being a smoker, he unfortunately had no matches in his pockets. 'Wait a moment, you worthless son of Ham!' said Oom Jan loud enough for Karkar to hear, 'I know there's a spade at your hut. I will fetch it and dig you out and then——!' But Karkar did not wait. As soon as Oom Jan was fairly on his way to the hut, which stood about half a mile away, he crept out of the hole, wriggled through a block of low rhinoceros-bush until he managed to put a *kopje* between Oom Jan and himself and then started running again. Oom Jan returned with the spade and started digging. He digged and perspired and perspired and digged, manufacturing tons of red hot compound words in the sweltering heat the while; but when he ultimately succeeded in clearing the *ertvark* mound away he found the hole—empty! Karkar never came back. He was a wise man. And Oom Jan would never afterwards tolerate the subject of ghosts being mentioned in his presence and certainly could never be brought to believe in their existence until that night when he stopped his waggon and outspanned on the little green opposite my house, and——. But here we are. I must tell you the story to-night or another time. At present we have other work to do. Hi, Stoffel, Louis, look alive there and send somebody to take the horses!

We were sitting shoulder to shoulder and back to back—six of us, three in a row—in an open Cape cart drawn by two big, bony, strong-looking horses, and had for the last hour been driving briskly along the eastern side of the Botrivier Lake, situated about twenty miles east of Cape Hanklip on the South African coast. We had left our host's farm at four A.M. sharp for a day's sport on the lake. It was barely five when we drew up and the southern cross was still showing faintly above the line of mountain peaks south-westwards. And it was late summer, or rather, early autumn, and there was that suspicion of frostiness about the March air, and that delicious odour of reviving nature after a mountain fire and a thunder shower, which add so much to the pleasures of early morning existence in the south-coast districts of the Cape Colony.

As I have stated, there were six of us in the cart—our host, his two brothers (Pieter and Koos), farmer Gert, Dr. X., and myself. Farmer Gert was a dead shot—the best man behind a



SENT OOM JAN SPINNING OVER HIS HEAD

gun for leagues round; but he carried one double-barrelled drawback about with him—he was inordinately fond of telling anecdotes and he stammered fearfully. The first time I heard him telling the story of the man with the parrot and the man that stuttered, I nearly laughed myself into a fit. Said Farmer Gert: 'W-w-w-wait, l-l-let me t-t-t-t-tell you a st-st-st-story. A f-f-f-fellow who st-st-st-st-stuttered almost as m-m-m-much as I d-do, m-m-m-met a m-m-m-man with a p-p-p-p-parrot. S-s-so he s-s-s-said t-t-to the m-m-m-man: "I s-s-s-say, f-f-friend, c-c-c-c-can that p-p-p-p-parrot t-t-t-t-talk?" Wh-wh-wh-where-upon the m-m-m-man re-p-p-p-plied: "B-b-b-by J-j-j-jove, f-f-f-friend, if that p-p-p-p-parrot c-c-c-c-couldn't t-t-t-t-talk b-b-b-b-b-better than you d-d-d-do, I'd wr-r-r-r-ring his n-n-n-n-neck for him!"'

We came to a stop on a sort of platform of old granite about fifty feet above the level of the lake whose waters washed the base of the cliff immediately below on our right. A stone flagged aqueduct with a swift stream from the mountains rushing between its sides lay a few yards in front of us and led its contents straight over the cliff into the lake. We alighted and a Cape boy, preceded by our host's two sons—two strapping young fellows apparently about sixteen and seventeen respectively—ran up and took charge of our turnout. We proceeded down a long slanting flight of broad steps cut in the face of the cliff to the water's edge. Here, at the foot of the waterfall formed by the aqueduct and in a little cove or rent in the rocks roofed over with tiles, lay the only thing of its kind in South Africa—a beautiful yacht-shaped houseboat driven by electricity. The mountain stream from the aqueduct fell a height of fifty feet sheer into a turbine connected with a dynamo, which charged the accumulators of the boat as it lay in its snuggery. From the accumulators powerful motors and other machinery supplied propelling power, electric light and pumping to the *Platpandoeka*, as the gilt lettering on its port bow told me this capital little sporting-box on the water was called. Our host turned a small handle, and immediately, as if by magic, out flashed the electric light and lit up the boat from stem to stern. I could not help uttering a cry of admiration, and Farmer Gert, noticing this, laid his hand on my shoulder and said: 'W-w-w-wait, l-l-l-let me t-t-t tell you how it's d-d-d-done. The w-w-w-water f-falls into that w-w-w-wheel and t-t-t-t-transmits the f-f-f-f-f-. . . .' 'Oh, come, Gert,' interrupted our host, laughing, 'three score and ten is man's

allotted span, and there won't be time at our age to hear you finish your explanation, much as we should like to listen to it. Stoffel, hitch on the pinnace; Louis, tell Antoon to serve breakfast at once: we shall never hit anything to-day unless we look after the inner man at starting. Ready? Well then, turn on the current and go straight ahead.'

Softly we glided into the lake, the vibration so slight that the glasses on the rack in the saloon, where we sat down to breakfast, did not emit either rattle or clink. It was evident that Antoon, the cook, understood his business. Oysters, rasped bultong, and scrambled eggs, steaming bobootie, hanepoot grapes and bananas, with the best of coffee and cognac, were set out in a way to tempt far less hungry people than we were; and Wintvool, Antoon's coal-black Mozambiquer assistant, waited upon us with a quiet readiness and a beaming smile that made me envy his master the possession of such a cabin boy.

'And where in the world did you get the idea of the *Platpandoeka* from, Mr. A.?' I asked our host.

'That's easy enough to answer. Do you remember my telling you one day, a year or two ago, whilst you were piloting me through the Teddington Lock, that I was leaving for Switzerland next day and did not want to get run down and drowned in the Thames before I had seen that country? Well, I went. At Zürich I met and made friends with an American engineer who was amusing himself with just such a boat as this on the lake there. I spent a couple of weeks with him and he showed me the ins and outs of the whole thing. Being a bit of an engineer myself in my own way and knowing of the immense latent power that lay hidden in the stream you have just seen in the aqueduct, my American friend and I put our heads together, and under his superintendence a Swiss firm made me an exact duplicate of that houseboat on Lake Zürich. This duplicate I carted out to South Africa, my friend the engineer most kindly accompanying me here to superintend its setting up and the construction of the turbine, &c. We imported all our machinery and woodwork; Hottentot and Malay labour did the rest. During their holidays I taught my two youngest boys, Stoffel and Louis, how to manage the *Platpandoeka*, and you will be able to judge for yourself whether they have been apt pupils. I imported the electric launch or pinnace, too. It will prove useful for towing purposes should anything go wrong with our machinery while we are out on the lake, and it is, besides, a

capital little sporting boat, as I think you will acknowledge before the day is out.'

When we ascended to the upper or promenade deck, we found our guns and cartridge-belts laid out for us by Louis, Stoffel being at the wheel. The sun was just rising and the morning was exquisitely lovely. The lake is about fifteen miles long with an average breadth of four miles. We were sailing or steaming or electricising, or whatever other technical name may be appropriate, about midway between the two ends and could just catch a glimpse of the blue Atlantic beyond the low barrier of white sand in the south. Some distance on our left Babylon's Peak stood out boldly with its 6000 feet of solid rock fronting us still cast in shadow; while on our right the Houwhoek Mountains in all the glory of sunlight playing upon the tinges of early autumn caprice stretched away southwards and broke off abruptly in the sea. The mountain slopes on either side were dotted here and there with farming homesteads, white-walled and reed-thatched, and the surface of the lake was like a mirror, except where . . . ah! '*Hi, stoop! Stoop down all! There's a flock of wild geese coming round the corner!*' Pieter did not speak a moment too soon; for scarcely had I grasped my gun and bolted behind the little wheelhouse, when 'BOM!—*BANG!!*' rang out some one's two barrels followed immediately by a whole salvo of small artillery. A large dark-plumed goose came plunging out of the sky, struck the wheelroom, rebounded, and fell almost at my feet. A magnificent bird; it scaled 13½ lbs. Two others fell into the lake and were quickly hauled out by Antoon with a boathook; for we had neither retriever nor any other sort of dog on board.

Birds were swarming around us now. 'Back water, Stoffel! Louis, get into the pinnace and see if you can bring that flock of coot and ducks ahead within range of our guns. Ask one of our friends to accompany you with his gun. There will be capital sport from the pinnace should they try to break through.' I jumped in with Louis, who grasped a spoke of the small wheel with his one hand, gave half a turn to a brass handle with the other, and we shot ahead. We skirted a huge flock of coot, wild duck, and teal—there must have been thousands swimming together all in a heap—and then gradually began to lessen our distance from them. The *Platpandoeka* was lying immovable with not a soul on board showing. As we closed in, the birds showed unmistakable signs of becoming suspicious; but instead

of breaking, they gradually drifted closer and closer to the house-boat, until it almost looked as though the leaders were going to hop up the gangway and invite Antoon to come out and take his choice. Then there was a sudden gleam of gun barrels, followed by smoke and chaos and plumping duckshot, and the next instant I was blazing away right and left at the whirring mass of wings breaking and surging past and over the pinnace. My! it was splendid!—from our point of view; I can't say whether the ducks and coot enjoyed it. And the pinnace did all the picking-up; she answered to her wheel and that little brass handle like a good horse to its bridle.

'Now then, gentlemen,' said our host as soon as Antoon and Wintvool had vanished below with the last of the slaughtered birds, "load with *loopers*' (SSG.) 'and please do not fire another shot until we reach Muscovy Creek. We must try and bag a couple of muscovies this morning—a useless attempt if we fire any more before we reach the creek. Besides, we are out for sport and not for slaughter to-day.' Although Farmer Gert's hands twitched as the duck and teal came sailing over our heads in showers every now and again, he knew that a brace of that wildest of wild Cape Lake birds, the *wilde mackou* or wild muscovy, was considered worth a dozen smaller birds by sportsmen, and that it was absolutely necessary to obey orders if we meant to catch the muscovies in their haunts. So we quietly stole shoreward behind a small headland. Here the doctor and our host landed and crept a few hundred yards inland and so to the top of the ridge overlooking the creek. Pieter and Farmer Gert and Stoffel next started out into the lake with the pinnace, making a wide sweep that would bring them to the lower corner of the entrance to Muscovy Creek. Louis took the *Platpandoeka's* wheel and Koos and I sat smoking behind the wheelroom, our guns over our knees. Ten—fifteen—twenty minutes passed. Then the whistle of the pinnace gave a shrill screech somewhere away in the distance, we rounded the headland at full speed, and a minute later four barrels resounded from the top of the ridge, and two muscovies—the only ones that showed that day—turned aërial somersaults and came down flop!—one within a foot of the doctor's spectacled nose. The creek seemed a solid mass of wild-fowl; Farmer Gert and Pieter shot a pelican, another goose, and I cannot say how many ducks, from the pinnace; while Koos brought down a long-legged, scarlet-winged flamingo that came sailing over the *Platpandoeka* as we entered the creek.

A LARGE DARK-PLUMED GOOSE FELL ALMOST AT MY FEET

Our next move was to cross the lake from east to west, which we did under full pressure. Myriads of birds surrounded us on all sides; but the best sport lay in trying to pot the ducks as they skipped over our heads. Farmer Gert could give us all points and still win hands down, so to speak. He would break off in the middle of one of his extraordinary stories with: 'W-w-w-w-wait, here c-c-c-comes one!'—his thong-strapped old double-barrel would fly to his shoulder, the next moment a duck would topple down into the water with a splash, and Louis, who was following in the pinnace, would stop and retrieve it. As we neared the western shore, the water shallowed. Our host merely turned a handle, a pump started working, and in ten minutes our water-ballast was out, our draught reduced by a couple of feet, and we could step on dry land over the length of the pinnace. Antoon and Wintvool at once rolled up their trousers and stepped into the water a few yards from our landing-place. 'I had the seine set here last night,' said our host, 'let us see whether it contains anything.' No sooner said than done. The two niggers tugged and hauled with all their might and landed the glittering, struggling mass in no time. Wonderful! Silverfish, lake trout, steenbras, pike, springers—thirty-seven large and delicate fish in the meshes. The score or two of smaller fry we threw back into the water; Antoon and Wintvool carried the rest aboard in a couple of baskets.

And now to the island for lunch. We could see the green mass of foliage rising out of the waters of the lake some two miles further south. I went into the little galley and stood watching the cook and Wintvool manipulate our morning's spoil. The entrails of the birds were removed and then Wintvool handed them one by one to Antoon, who first squirted some vinegar into each with a syringe and then hung them on hooks in a small refrigerating chamber a couple of steps down the hold.

'I see you mean to lay in a winter supply for your home larder to-day, Mr. A.,' I said to our host, when I joined the party later on deck.

'Oh no, no need for that, my boy. Antoon is preparing the surplus for to-night's post-cart I always send my friends in Capetown a few score brace and a dozen or so of trout when we have them to send, and my friends reply by sending me every imaginable oddity in the way of new books, magazines, and illustrated papers. Look at that French paper, now: it

contains some capital illustrations of M. Bazin's six-wheeled, or rather, six-*keeled* roller-boat, and, though I do not understand a word of the letterpress, the thing interests me immensely.'

'W-w-w-w-wait, w-w-w-what did you s-s-s-say? A s-s-s-s-six-k-k-k-keeled b-boat? G-g-g-great Sc-sc-scot! if there's s-s-so much f-f-f-f-fuss with one k-k-k-keel in a ch-ch-ch-choppy s-sea, wh-wh-what in all c-c-c-conscience do p p-p-people w-w-w-want with s s-s six?' exclaimed Farmer Gert. Just then the whistle sounded. We had reached the island, and the gangway led straight from the saloon to *terra firma*. About two hundred yards in length and about forty in breadth, the banks of this little spot form an almost perfect breeding-ground for the thousands of waterfowl that swarm around it. In the centre stands an enormous orange-tree planted here some thirty or forty years ago by our host's predecessor; and we had the pleasure of witnessing that strange natural curiosity—an orange tree covered with golden fruit, green fruit, and sweet-smelling blossoms, all at one and the same time. The sun was burning hot. Antoon and Wintvool brought a couple of bamboo tables and a number of chairs and campstools ashore and served lunch for us under the spreading branches of this tree. Our host had a portable refrigerator with a sulphuric acid condenser on board, and a tumbler or two of iced pontac in the shade seemed the very thing—at least, so thought I; and Farmer Gert's keeping a cane-covered *kabaar* of the same liquid and a pound of ice all to himself led me to conclude that he was of the same opinion. Then we had a smoke and a snooze.

About three o'clock there came a whiff of cool air from the mountains and we started for the south end of the lake. Another brace of geese, half a boatful of ducks and teal, and we ran into a little bay of silver sand fringed with driftwood and separated from the Atlantic by a low dune not a hundred yards across. After a dip in the breakers, we recrossed the dune and walked to a small marsh, the reeds and cane and palmetto-matting in which had been burnt out by our host a few days previously to enable us to get at the snipe for which the place was noted. Now, I enjoy snipe shooting as much as most people do, but I confess that the pleasure of watching Farmer Gert at work that afternoon was greater than that of potting snipe myself. At what stage in its flight ought one to shoot a snipe? I had always thought the best answer to this question would be: As soon as ever you can get the bead on him—the sooner the better. Until I started watching Farmer

Gert. And then I changed my opinion. Gert certainly did it scientifically. Perhaps he did not even know that there was any science in what he was doing. But he did it scientifically for all that. A snipe almost invariably describes a sort of obtuse-angled curve in its flight after it has risen from under one's feet. The second after it turned—nay, whilst in the very act of turning—the angle in the curve, Farmer Gert fired; never before and never after. *He fired off fifteen cartridges during the half-hour or so we spent in the marsh; and he bagged fifteen snipe.* I have myself been so lucky as to drop three partridges on the wing at one shot, 'all in a row'; and I was vain enough to imagine that a mighty fine performance; but if ever I manage to imitate Farmer Gert's half hour snipe record, I shall begin to think I can shoot.

Then we sailed for Platpandoeka Creek, found our cart and horses waiting, and drove home. Gert and I occupied the same bedroom; and the last thing I heard that night before I sank into dreamland was: 'W-w-w-wait, l-l-l-let me t t tell you a st-st st-st-. . . .'

And our further adventures in the *Platpandoeka?* And the ghost that ultimately succeeded in converting Oom Jan?

Ah—'that's another story.'

THE VISION OF MR. BLENKINSOP

BY ANTHONY C. DEANE

'A GRAND match, sir,' said the stranger who occupied the next chair.

Mr. Blenkinsop started. How came he to be seated on the county ground? In a sense, there was nothing remarkable in that, for the Loamshire Cricket Club had no more enthusiastic supporter than Mr. Blenkinsop. But on this particular day he had taken up the *Sportsman* in his study after lunch, and had intended, after glancing through the scores of the principal matches, to accompany his wife on a round of calls. Clearly, in an absent-minded fit he must have put on his hat and strolled down to the cricket-ground—or had he taken a cab? For the life of him he could not remember. At any rate, here he was, seated comfortably in his usual corner by the pavilion rails. So he dismissed the puzzle from his mind and turned to his neighbour.

'Er—I beg your pardon—you were saying——?'

'A grand match,' repeated the other with emphasis; 'remarkable fine play, sir!'

Mr. Blenkinsop gazed at the players. 'Ah, Loamshire is in, I see,' he remarked, noticing that the batsmen wore the familiar county cap. For a moment it struck him as odd that both their faces were strange to him. 'Trying some fresh blood in the team,' he murmured to himself. Then he glanced at the telegraph. It stood at 210, and no wickets had fallen.

'Excellent!' he cried aloud. 'A splendid start! Why, after getting set like that, they ought to stay in all day!'

'All day?' echoed his companion with a laugh. 'Why, bless you, I doubt if they'll be parted in a week!'

Mr. Blenkinsop smiled at this humorous exaggeration, and

set himself to watch the play with critical eyes. The first over he noticed was a maiden. So was the second, which, considering the score, was strange. So was the third, which was stranger. But so were the fourth and fifth! At last, one of the batsmen snicked the third ball of the sixth over to the boundary, and all the spectators cheered long and loud.

Mr. Blenkinsop took off his spectacles, polished them carefully, and turned to his companion with an air of extreme bewilderment.

'Dear me!' he observed, 'the wicket must be frightfully difficult!'

'Difficult?' was the reply; 'no, not particularly. They *did* say at lunch-time that one or two balls had risen half an inch more than they ought. Still, it's a fairish wicket. What makes you think it difficult?'

'What? Why, the way they're playing, to be sure,' Mr. Blenkinsop answered. 'The scoring's so terribly slow!'

'That it certainly isn't,' retorted the stranger with emphasis. 'Didn't you see that boundary-hit just now? And haven't they put on twelve runs in the last two hours? Bless my soul, sir, what more do you want? Almost reckless hitting, *I* call it!'

'But—but,' protested Mr. Blenkinsop, 'they'll never finish the match at this rate! If you talk like that you can't know much about cricket!'

'Can't I, though?' replied the other with a grim smile. 'Well, sir, my name's Robinson, and I happen to be playing for Loamshire myself!'

Mr. Blenkinsop started, and then gazed incredulously at his companion's tweed suit.

'Oh yes,' said Mr. Robinson, noticing his look, 'I'm not in flannels—why should I be? I don't go in until sixth wicket down, so the chances are that I shan't be wanted for a week.'

'Oh, of course not,' Mr. Blenkinsop agreed, feebly endeavouring to conceal his obvious astonishment; 'not for a week, quite so. Dear me! so most likely you won't be wanted for a week.'

'Look here, sir,' said Mr. Robinson pointedly, 'I should like to ask *you* the question you put to me just now. Do *you* know much about first-class cricket nowadays?'

'I suppose not,' Mr. Blenkinsop admitted. 'I certainly used to think—but no, if this is first-class cricket, it's—it's quite strange to me.'

'So I thought. And, of course, we've altered it completely in the course of the last few years. You've been abroad, perhaps? No? Well, as I was saying, it's quite a different game from what it used to be.'

'So I perceive,' said Mr. Blenkinsop.

'And much more scientific in every way. (Oh, well hit, Smithers—well hit, sir! *What* a slogger! that's the second run he's made in this over!) The improvement began soon after 1899. You may remember, sir, that in that season there were a great number of drawn games, especially against the Australians. Consequently it was proposed that all matches should be played to a finish.'

'Yes, I remember some idiotic suggestion of the kind; but you can't mean to say——'

'It was not idiotic by any means,' retorted Mr. Robinson with some asperity; 'on the contrary, the M.C.C. was convinced of its wisdom, and carried it out, with the result that we never have drawn games nowadays.'

'And how long does it take to finish an ordinary match?' Mr. Blenkinsop inquired.

'The time varies, of course. I *have* known a game to be over in eight days.'

'In eight days!' Mr. Blenkinsop gasped.

'Oh, of course, it was a terribly one-sided affair; but usually it lasts from a fortnight to three weeks. For instance, we began this innings just five days ago, and——'

'But what's the matter? Look, all the players are coming in!'

'Oh,' explained Mr. Robinson, 'that's only because the hour's up. We have ten minutes for rest and refreshment at the end of every hour, besides longer intervals for luncheon and tea. As I was saying, with unlimited time before them, the batsmen found that the absolutely safe style of play was far the best. Of course they've developed it by practice, so that scarcely any one is ever bowled nowadays. Yet, on the other hand, the bowling has become so extraordinarily good that it's hardly possible to make runs off it, and now and then our best bowlers, whose balls zigzag in the air, do hit the wickets once or twice in the season. Timmis, for instance, of Sandishire, has been very successful lately with his automatic-stumping ball.'

'Indeed!' said Mr. Blenkinsop; 'and what is that?'

'It's a high ball pitched over the batsman's head, which

drops to the ground a foot or so on the other side of the wicket. Then it screws back like lightning and knocks the bails off.'

'Most remarkable,' Mr. Blenkinsop said rather suspiciously; 'I should like to see it. But how about other cricket—matches between local clubs, and villages, and so on? Are those played out to a finish also, and do they take as long? I don't quite see how people could spare the time.'

'No, that would be a difficulty,' the other admitted. 'But, as a matter of fact, there are no games of the kind you mention nowadays. Instead of playing themselves, people prefer to come and look on. They like taking their exercise by deputy, and—hullo!' he broke off, 'why—surely—yes, Smithers is out; leg-before! One for 227, and Smithers has got 130 of them, in less than six days' play, too! Bravo, Smithers!' and he joined in the tumultuous applause which greeted the retiring batsman. 'A fine cricketer, sir,' he resumed; 'a smart field at extra-double-cover slip, and a useful bowler, too. In our last match he bowled thirty-five consecutive maiden overs.'

'And how many wickets did he get?'

Mr. Robinson laughed. 'Excuse me, sir, but it is so amusing to hear you speak of wickets in that way. He got *one*, and that was a man caught in the long-field, a thing which only happens once or twice in a season. Isn't that enough for you? If you drop in some day towards the end of next week, perhaps you may see him bowling. I daresay Loamshire may be all out by then.'

'Next week! And what will he do in the meantime?'

'Oh, a celebrated cricketer like Smithers has his hands full, I assure you. First of all, he has to be photographed half a dozen times a day; then he has to see the interviewers, who take up most of his mornings. Of course the editors pay him his own price for his opinions on political questions. "The Siberian Problem: What Smithers Thinks"—a line like that on a contents-bill is safe to sell a huge edition. Then he writes autographs, answers innumerable invitations, and so on, not to mention his books. You *must* have read his three-volume treatise on "The Leg-glance: its Nature and Development." No? Nor his quarto on "Some Characteristics of the Yorker?" Why, it's the standard work on the subject.'

'And who is this going in now?' asked Mr. Blenkinsop, as a fresh batsman walked across the turf towards the wickets.

'Ah, that's Snigson, a stylish bat, not a *very* free hitter,

though I've seen him make a five or six in an hour before now.'

His style, however, did not enchant Mr. Blenkinsop; the bowler, evidently trying to tempt him, sent down an over of slow long-hops wide of the wicket. Snigson watched them contemptuously and kept his bat fast in his block-hole. Mr. Blenkinsop thought of other days, when every one of these balls would have been despatched to the boundary, and sighed.

The spectators, however, evidently were delighted, and cries of 'That's the style!' 'Good old Snigs!' and the like went up from the crowded ring.

'Pretty, isn't it?' said Mr. Robinson admiringly. 'When he's in form he'll stay at the wickets for hours without ever hitting the ball more than a yard or so. That's cricket, that is!'

'Then I'm sorry to hear it,' retorted Mr. Blenkinsop, fairly exasperated. 'Why in the world doesn't he hit out?'

'Hit out? Ah, we've done with that flashy style of play nowadays! Why should he hit out when he's got unlimited time before him? Hit out, indeed—and probably he'd be caught before he had been batting an hour, in which case there'd be precious little chance of *his* playing for Loamshire again! Besides'—Mr. Robinson began to thump his stick on his chair in his excitement—'what would become of our gate-money if we went in for that sort of play? "Gate-money before all else" is our motto, sir' (he thumped louder and louder), 'and with matches lasting three weeks or more it tots up to a tidy sum!'

He thumped so hard that Mr. Blenkinsop feared he would break his chair . . .

. . . . . .

What? . . . could it be? . . . Why, yes . . . he was in his study, with the *Sportsman* still on his knees, and some one was knocking at the door!

'Hullo!' he cried, rubbing his eyes, 'what the dickens—why, I must have been dreaming! Yes—well, what's the matter? What are you making that noise about?'

'Couldn't make you 'ear, sir,' replied Mary Ann's voice from the other side of the door. 'I was to tell you that Missus is quite ready to go out, and is waitin' for you in the 'all.'

THE SELECTION OF A HUNTER

BY F. M. CHAPMAN

'Oh, easy enough!' says Inexperience. 'Jump into the train with a ticket to your nearest dealer, and take with you as accessories your cheque-book and your vet.' 'Wait a minute,' says Experience. 'You may go and become possessed of a horse, but a good hunter is not so easily acquired.'

A good hunter! Where is he to be found? You, my hunting readers, may have had scores of horses in your time, but how many really 'good hunters' have you had—horses with manners that could gallop, stay, and jump anything and everything; horses with constitutions that nothing came amiss to; horses that could always do their work well and keep sound? Out of the multitude you may have had you will, I am sure, be able to count upon the fingers of one hand those that have been 'good,' by which I mean perfect hunters in every respect that you could ride with confidence and pleasure. Why should this be so? A question somewhat difficult of solution, and one on which I will not now dwell, but stick to my text and discuss only the necessary requisites for 'the selection of a hunter.'

Size, quality, best of hocks, good shoulders, strong back, loin, and quarters, on the best of limbs, with two good ends,

that he carries himself without artificial aid, able to gallop fast and stay, and be a faultless jumper. What say you to such description? Good enough? Well, yes! But the most important thing of all I have omitted—namely, manners. Your hunter may be the embodiment of the former qualifications, but if he lacks the latter he shall find no favour with me.

Manners, then, being absolutely essential to the pleasure of hunting, let me discuss them first.

Have you ever been unceremoniously bucked off before the whole field at a time when you least expected it? Have you ever slided as gracefully as possible over the tail of your horse when he is coming over backwards with you?—kicked your best friend, or his horse?—broken the ribs of a hound or two? —jumped a gate when you had fully intended only to open and go through it in orthodox fashion, and been jumped off in consequence?—upset your neighbour by crossing him at his fence, which no power of yours could prevent?—annoyed every one generally though most unintentionally?—and, finally, been run away with, and stopped only at last in your Johnny Gilpinlike career by the aid of a friendly pond, into which your horse has jumped without the slightest wish expressed or implied on your part? Then, if you have done any of these things, you will fully appreciate the value of manners, or, rather, deplore the bad taste of your horse in being entirely devoid of them.

A hunter with manners should be a horse you can do as you like with. You should be able to 'get up' in comfort, pull up your girths, alter your leathers, twist him north, south, east or west at will; walk, trot and gallop at pleasure; pop him over here, there, and everywhere, with horses and from horses. In every way he should be your humble and obliging servant, and when you find a horse this way inclined be assured his manners at least are good.

Now for a word or two on the subject of size. Admitting the truth of the old adage, 'A good big 'un is always better than a good little 'un,' buy your horses big enough. Granted, that for a very hilly country and for an extra long and trying day, a compactly-made muscular horse, say 15·2, will wear down and last longer than a horse a hand bigger. Still, for ordinary hunting, for comfort and for value, give me a good big one. He goes a bit better through the dirt with you, he gets up a bit better at his fences, he covers more ground when extended, especially in his jumping, and in addition—a fact, mind you, not to be derided—your fences look very much smaller.

So much for manners and size; now to quality. What an essential! Have you ever ridden a common underbred horse? Have you noticed the marvellous way in which, perhaps, he will jump the first few places with you, but how soon his pluck and endurance disappear until, after galloping, say, five or six fields, he rolls about like a ship in a gale, hasn't a jump left in him, and lands you an awful cropper in a ditch he fails to extend himself over? On the other hand, quality seems always to have a leg to spare upon landing, always a little bit of a spurt left

DEPLORE THE BAD TASTE OF YOUR HORSE

when wanted, carries you airily and gaily, makes light of a long and tiring journey home, and comes out fit and well on the morrow.

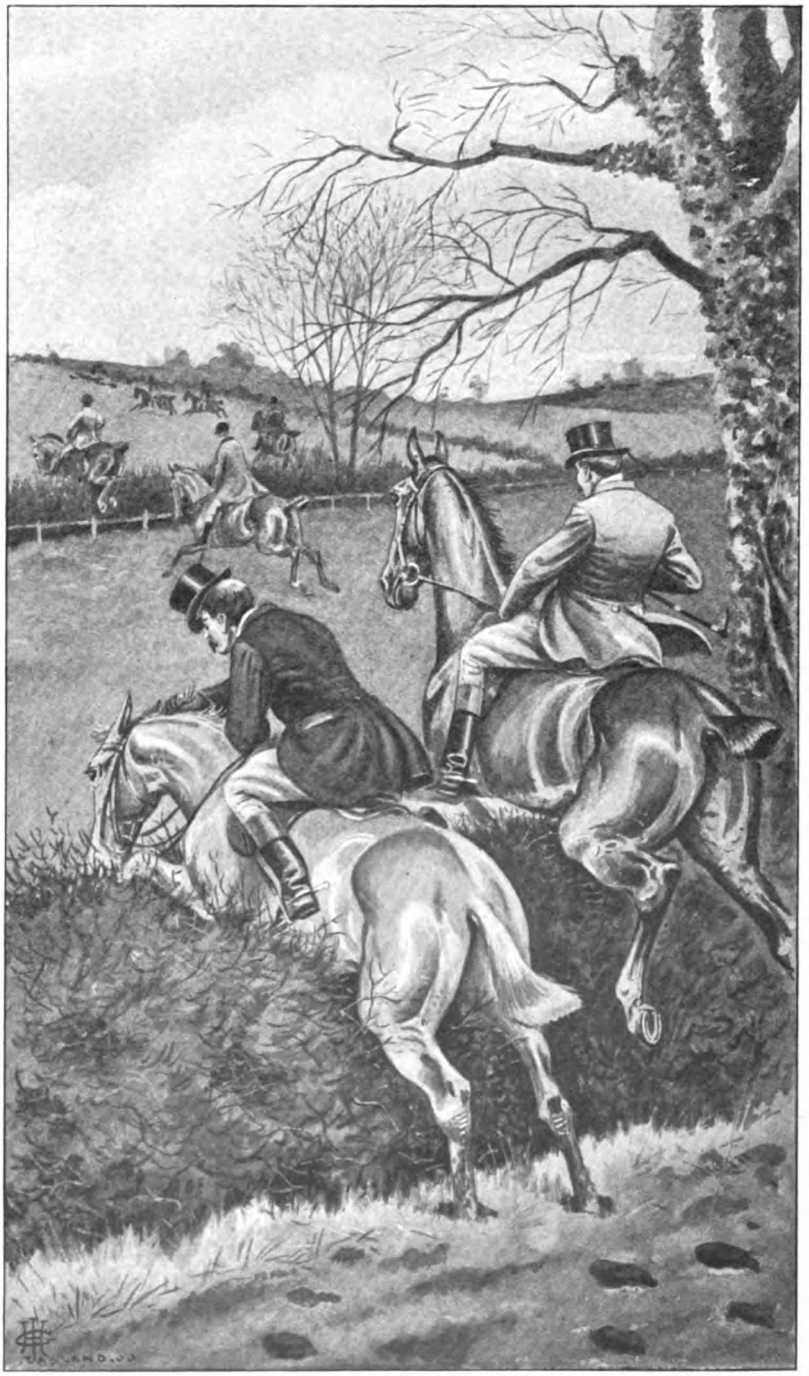
Now let us have a look at hocks and shoulders. What, say you, is the propelling power of a horse; where does he gallop from, jump from, pull the trap from? Why, his hocks, of course. There can be no question upon this point, and in selecting a hunter let me impress upon the purchaser the importance to be placed upon it. Not only, however, must the horse have sound big hocks, but—and herein lies the chief point—he must be able to flex them. Get on a horse in the dirt that cannot use his hocks, then ride one that can, and the difference is something startling. Shut your eyes in a trap,

and from the motion of it alone you can tell in a minute whether or not the horse flexes his hocks. Ride over a stiff fence out of heavy ground, and having got safely to the other side, thank your stars that you made a point of hocks when selecting your horse! Get stranded over the same fence another time on a weak-hocked animal, and blame no one but yourself for your error in judgment when buying. To be carried strongly and well you must have hock action, and so forcibly do I feel upon this point that I put the subject of hocks before everything else in the physical qualifications of a hunter. 'I shouldn't,' I fancy I hear some say; 'I should go for shoulders'; and so, doubtless, there are many who would. Shoulders, however, are, to a certain extent, a luxury, or, in other words, a matter of comfort; you may, whilst on very indifferent shoulders, outride your neighbour upon the best; you may jump where he cannot follow you; you may ride your horse home comparatively fresh when his shall be dead-beat. So that, whilst admitting, for comfort's sake, that your shoulders should be as good as you can possibly obtain, I do not look upon them as such an essential element in a hunter as good hocks that a horse flexes well.

In making these remarks upon shoulders do not imagine I consider them of trifling importance. Far from it. All who have ever ridden know their value; you surely find the want of them in your gallop down hill, on your horse pecking when landing over a fence, and in his uncomfortable roll over ridge and furrow, a drawback invariably associated with bad shoulders. Choose shoulders set as far back as possible, never mind how strong they may be; the stronger the better, provided the horse can make proper use of them. Don't trouble about high or spiky withers; they have nothing to do with shoulders. I have seen plenty of horses made in the latter form, and in consequence have heard men remark what beautiful shoulders they had, whilst in reality they have been as upright and bad as possible. On the other hand, I have seen horses with little or no withers worth speaking of condemned as being deficient in shoulders, whereas all the time they have been first rate.

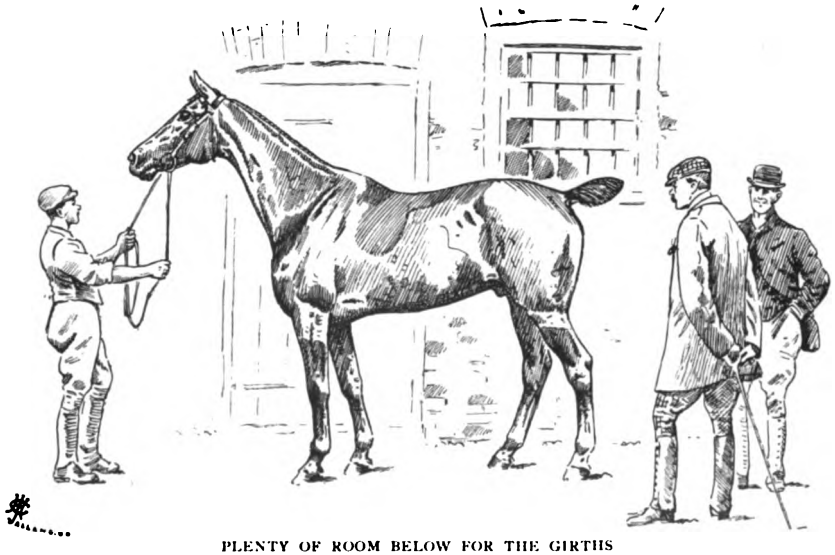
In selecting your horse as to shoulders, first have a good look if there is plenty of room below for the girths, and if you find there is, then cast your eye upwards to the top, and in nine cases out of ten you will find the shoulders well set back and in every way satisfactory, provided the horse can use them well.

There remain now good back, loin, and quarters, with the



GOOD AND BAD HOCKS JUMPING OUT OF DEEP GROUND

best of limbs, to arrest attention. Strong back I said at first, and advisedly so. Not necessarily short back, for you will find that if in a horse you can get a fairly long back, and at the same time a strong back, he is generally an extra big jumper. The simple reason, doubtless, is that the better the weight is balanced and the longer the leverage behind the centre, of so much greater effect is the power of propulsion derived from the hocks and quarters of the horse. It may by some be thought good to see the saddle nearly cover the back, but it will be readily understood that the nearer you sit to the tail the greater the



PLENTY OF ROOM BELOW FOR THE GIRTHS

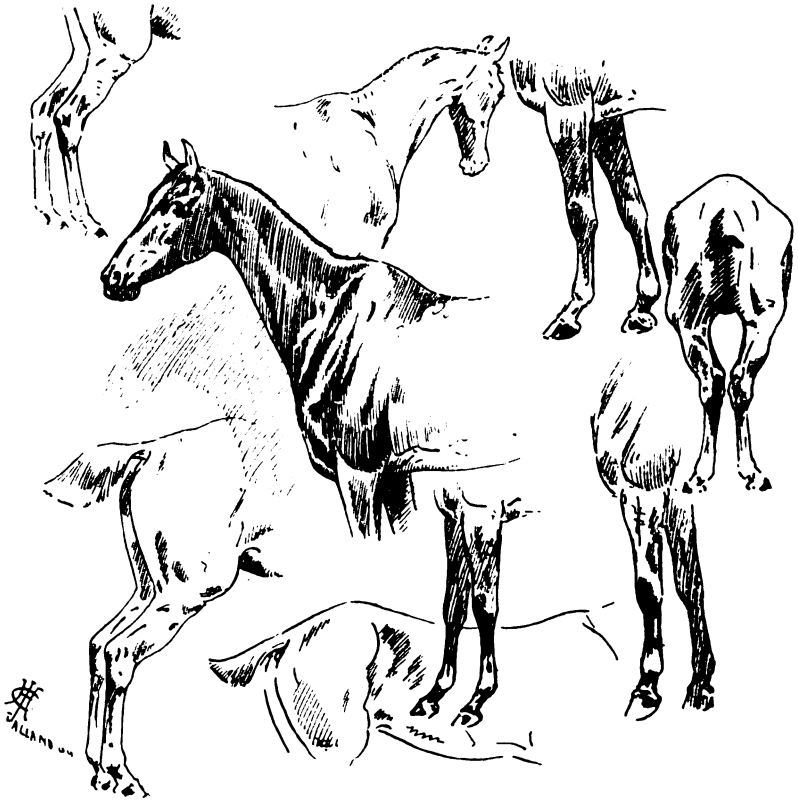
strain on such hocks and quarters, and the more difficult is propulsion made.

Let loin and quarters be big and muscular and the latter as lengthy and deep as possible, and let his limbs be the best you can find. Don't, however, necessarily discard a horse simply because he may have a few little humps or bumps on these ; many are of no consequence whatever, including splints well forward on the bone ; but on this head you must be advised by your vet as to their probable cause and consequence, and act accordingly.

Be sure that your contemplated purchase can gallop, can stay, and can jump, and this can only be decided on trial. See, too, that his wind is right, and don't be satisfied with an examination of this in a three- or four-acre grass field, wherein I

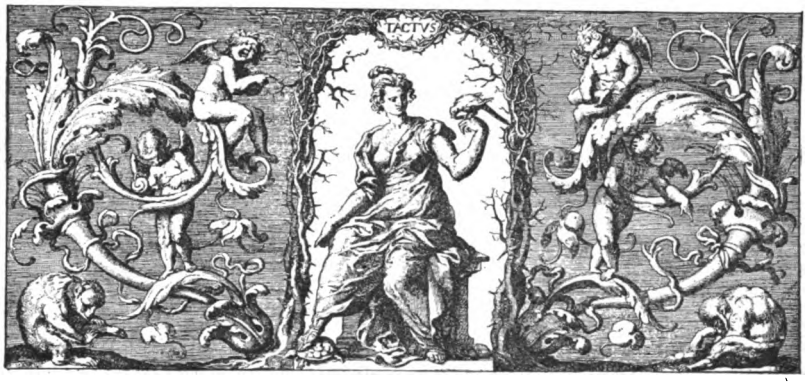
have seen many examined and passed, but put your horse across the plough in a long searching gallop. Remember, too, that many horses that will not grunt at the stick are certain whistlers, whilst I know of no case where a horse that does grunt at the stick can prove himself sound in wind when very severely tested.

My task is finished. I have endeavoured to outline the



A FEW BAD POINTS

principal points for a man to keep in his eye when he goes horse-dealing. I have only to add, Go find your horse with the necessary attributes to perfection as here suggested; when you have found him buy him, be his price what it may, and if he turns out possessed of the qualities I have here laid down for the making of a good hunter, I beg to offer you my sincere congratulations on your 'Selection of a Hunter,' and I shall venture to prophesy that no sum will tempt you to part company with him.



THE COST OF CYCLES

BY F. PERCY LOW

THE much talked about and frequently referred to 'man in the street' always has, or believes he has, exclusive and peculiar information on a variety of topics, and the fact that his information has time after time proved to be erroneous does not damp his ardour one whit. If there is one thing more than another that the man in the street is convinced of, it is that he knows exactly how much one ought to pay for a bicycle. True, he has during the past few years somewhat altered his ideas, but this does not affect him. A few years ago—say in 1897—he was certain that the proper price to pay for a good bicycle was somewhere between £25 and £30. He is now equally certain that no one with any sense would dream of paying more than £5 for the same article. It is a fact that even the most violent price-cutting in the trade has not reduced the price below ten guineas, or in one or two exceptional cases eight guineas; yet he is convinced that £5 will be reached before very long, and in proof of his contention he points to the circumstance that certain so-called high-grade American bicycles have been sold at this figure. I say advisedly 'so-called high-grade' American machines because, so far as I have been able to ascertain, the superior grade of these bicycles rests solely on the unsupported evidence of the makers. While not wishing in any way to disparage the commercial methods of our American friends, I have known cases where Americans—and Englishmen too, for the matter of

that—have taken an exaggerated idea of the excellence of their own wares. I propose very briefly to put before the readers of this magazine a few facts and figures to prove, if possible, that a really good bicycle cannot be sold at £5, or indeed, in most cases, at double that figure.

First of all, let me deal with the American machines, which a few years ago were undoubtedly to be bought in England at a very low price. It was claimed by the vendors of these articles that they were able to sell at this low figure owing to the enormous number of machines made by their particular firm, and also by reason of the fact that they employed automatic machinery, which enabled them to turn out bicycles with the same ease and rapidity as the average domestic servant shells peas. I do not deny that, given a standard pattern of bicycle from which no deviation in the slightest degree is made, it is possible, by the use of automatic machinery, to manufacture very cheaply; but it must not be forgotten that if half the automatic machinery is standing idle for any length of time it deteriorates in value, and, moreover, the half that is being used has to bear the dead charges of the whole; therefore, unless your automatic machinery is fully employed it is not a very great save.

The majority of these cycles which were to be obtained in the English market a few years ago were not sold at prices that remunerated the makers; that is to say, they were job lots manufactured in America, sold by the makers at a sacrifice in order to realise money, bought by enterprising dealers, and thrown upon the English market at low prices which just paid the speculator. In other cases the manufacturers themselves shipped direct to England their out-of-date and surplus stock, and realised at what the drapers call 'an alarming sacrifice' to save themselves from being loaded up with a lot of obsolete machines for which there was no market at all on their side of the water.

The proof of my statements is shown by the fact that American machines now selling in England are sold in the majority of cases at prices slightly higher than those charged by English makers; in fact, an American-made machine of really high class, and equipped in a similar manner to English ones, is rarely as cheap as the home product. It is very easy to price an American machine at the same as an English, but if the British one is fitted with brake, mudguards, and other accessories which the American has not, it is obviously the cheaper of the two.

Now, with regard to the turn out of English cycles. I propose to draw aside slightly the veil which hides the manufacture of these machines by putting figures before my readers, and ask them to judge for themselves how far the present price of machines is excessive. Let us take the bicycle which appears to be most popular at the present time, namely, the ten-guinea machine. This is sold by the manufacturer to the agent at about £8 5*s*. to £8 8*s*. Let us take it at £8 5*s*. The manufacturer has to buy a pair of tyres, a pair of pedals, a chain, a saddle, a pair of handles and other articles, which, as a rule, he does not make himself. If he buys well these will come out roughly at about £3 per machine, so that the bicycle so far as he is concerned must be made and sold for £5, out of which he has to make a profit. Now many people, I suppose, do not know the amount of what are called 'dead charges' that a cycle manufacturer has to contend with. There is the rent, rates and taxes of his factory, and possibly of his London office; he has to pay five directors probably £150 a year each; the managing director's salary will be something between £700 and £1000 per annum; he will have possibly twenty clerks to pay every week; he has at least six, probably eight, travellers who cost him about £3 a week each and a commission on their turnover; their travelling expenses will also be about £1 5*s*. for every day they are travelling; he has to make a reserve for bad and doubtful debts, has to allow discounts to agents, to provide for auditors, legal expenses—these latter, by the way, being often no small item—printing of price lists, which frequently cost as much as £500 in a year, advertising, stationery, printing circulars, pamphlets, leaflets, &c., petty cash, coals, light, &c., for the offices, and various other items.

It is easily seen that, even under the most careful management, these items may assume enormous proportions, and, in fact, unless the manufacturer is making an almost fabulous number of cycles, these may be safely set down at about £1 10*s*. per machine, which brings the prime cost of manufacture down to £3 10*s*. If you look carefully at the modern bicycle and reflect that it is made up of something like 200 parts,[1] you will wonder how a really good machine is to be made for this sum, and from this must be deducted a certain amount for profit.

[1] I have taken the figure 200 as supplied to me by a leading manufacturer, but a good deal depends upon what is taken as a separate part. If each different nipple, ball, &c., is taken, which, of course, is quite justifiable, then the number of parts would probably be nearer 2000 than 200.

No man cares to work for nothing, and even allowing that the net profit per machine is only 10*s*., which is a very low estimate indeed, and cutting things very fine, we see that a modern bicycle must be built and turned out of the factory for £3. Fork crowns have to be made, the frame built, wheels built and fitted, a pair of hubs, than which no more delicate piece of mechanism exists, have to be provided, cranks, handlebars are also component parts. The whole has then to be carefully built together, enamelled and plated, and turned out complete for £3.

That is what, at the present time, the public seem to expect, and indeed, hope, to see decreased. The impossibility of doing such a thing is demonstrated by the fact that out of twenty-three of the leading cycle manufactures at the present time only nine have paid any dividend to their shareholders, and only two have paid that ten per cent. which it is generally considered all industrial companies ought to pay. I have shown, I think, that the £2 per machine which is allowed by the maker to the agent as remuneration for selling the bicycle to the retail customer is about as much as it is possible to allow him, but when he comes to view it from the point of view of the agent, we see that there is very little indeed in the way of a living for him at this price.

The agent who sells 250 machines in the course of a year is in a fairly large way of business. I mean that he is not carrying on his trade in a back street, or in an out-of-the-way town; consequently his rent, rates and taxes will be fairly considerable. It would not be saying too much, after considering the amount of room he requires to store his cycles, to conclude that he will be paying something like £125 a year for his business premises. He must have at least two assistants, whose salaries probably will amount to another £100 a year, because he will be able to dispense with one of them during the dead season. His petty cash, local advertising, printing of billheads, postages, and sundries will be at least another £3 a week, or £150 per annum; he must make certain allowances for bad debts and discounts and deterioration of stock, another £1 a week. There are numerous other little expenses that might be tabulated, but the above come to the sum of £425 per annum, which leaves him with a profit on the year, supposing he sells all his machines, of £75 for himself, and this is the net profit on a turnover of £2500.

Of course an agent has other means of making a profit in

the way of repairs, letting machines out on hire, the selling of accessories, &c., or else it is obvious that on the sale of machines alone he could not make a living. But these other sources of income bring with them equally of course other expenses, although they are doubtless more remunerative than the actual selling of cycles. The agent has, moreover, to bear in mind that although he is called an agent, it is as the price lists say, purely a complimentary term, and that, strictly speaking, he is no agent at all; that is to say, if he orders 250 bicycles of a maker he has to pay for that number. None are taken back by the manufacturer, except in very exceptional circumstances. If an agent orders 250 and only sells 200, he has 50 left on his hands that he must dispose of either at cost price, or even under, so that his small £75 per annum profit may, when he comes to make up his books at the end of the year, be represented wholly, or partially, in stock that he may have a considerable amount of difficulty in getting rid of.

'The man in the street' before referred to may not unnaturally say 'What is all this to me? If makers and agents are fools enough to sell bicycles below cost price I should be an idiot not to avail myself of their philanthropy.' On the face of it this may be so, but it must be borne in mind that no one can continue selling goods at a loss, and there is always a keen desire on the part of the manufacturer to turn this loss into a profit by reducing the cost of production. Now, I have pointed out that there is very little room to make a reduction out of £3, and it is only to be done at the expense of efficiency. Makers of cheap machines are always keenly on the look-out for what are called 'job lines,' that is to say, lots of material that are being sold below cost, and which naturally are not of the highest possible class, with a result that a breakdown on a cheap machine is not absolutely unheard of. Few people, perhaps, realise that every time they ride a bicycle they are staking life and limb against the excellence of the machine. Take the question of chains for instance. Consider what would be the consequence to a man or woman riding down a hill at, say, 15 to 20 miles an hour, and the chain suddenly snapping; the result would probably be at least fractured limbs, especially bearing in mind that cheap machines, as a general rule, are not fitted with any brake. Now, there is no part of any machine on which more depends than the chain, yet my readers would perhaps be surprised were I to tell them how cheaply chains can be bought, and at the same time what a difference in price

there is between a really high-class chain, and those which are in many cases fitted to cheap machines. There is a reason for everything, and it stands to reason that the lowest price chain cannot by any possibility be as good as the highest price one, and considering how overwhelmingly important is this part of the machine, one would think that too high a price could not be paid for it.

Then, again, cheap machines are made on what is known as the piecework principle, as opposed to day work. In the former case the workmen employed on different parts of the bicycles are paid so much for each operation that they complete. It is, therefore, obviously to their interest to make as many as possible, and the excellence of each one made is not so much a point with them as the aggregate number turned out. Of course each piece of work they do has to pass a man who is called a viewer, who has to see that it is satisfactory ; but if the viewer is incompetent, or careless, or a friend of the workman's, it is quite possible to get work passed by him which is not by any means up to the standard, to say nothing of the fact that if a piece workman finds his work perpetually rejected he very soon throws up the job. On the other hand, day work, which is the means by which most high-class machines are made, gives no temptation to workmen to slur over, or to do their work improperly. Each man is paid so much an hour, and it is just as much to his interest to see that his work is of the highest quality as to turn out one or more operations extra ; and in many of the high-class workshops every piece of work bears the workman's private mark, so that in the event of anything going wrong with it it can be traced back to the culprit. It will be seen, therefore, that it is obviously to the advantage of every one who values his life and limb to spend the extra money in buying a high-class machine, although it is, of course, quite possible that a cheap machine by a good maker may be perfectly safe, although it never has that life and freedom of action that a high-class machine has. Many people, no doubt, cannot see the difference, looking in a shop window, between the high-grade machine and a cheaper one. The plating and enamelling appear pretty much the same, therefore they argue that it would be sheer waste of money on their part to spend the extra £4 or £5 on an expensive machine. Of course if it is a question as to what people can spend, I suppose no one who could afford it would willingly risk himself on a livery stable hack to go hunting if he could contrive to buy a properly

'made' hunter; but to such as have to study economy I would suggest that they would do better to buy a second-hand high-grade machine than a new low-grade one.

I have purposely, in this article, refrained from saying anything about cheap machines made by small local makers, which are made up of standard and well-known fittings. It is quite possible to buy a good machine of this type, because the local maker has no big establishment charges, and sells direct to his customer, but a cycle of this sort is one of the greatest lotteries possible to imagine. The local maker may be a good workman or he may not. He may be capable of making up his fittings into a good machine, or, on the other hand, he may have the most rudimentary ideas on the subject, and perhaps turn out something that looks all right, but never gives satisfaction. These local makers are, in many instances, men who have been in big cycle factories, but, in the majority of instances, they have been confined to making one, or, at the most, two or three, parts, and with just this knowledge they consider themselves capable of building a machine from start to finish. As a general rule the local man is a very excellent repairer and a very bad machine builder. The difference between a bicycle put together by an experienced man and one built by a job repairer is the same as a Clasper-built boat and one constructed by the local riverside boatkeeper, or to carry it perhaps more closely the difference between a first-class gun and the keeper's five guinea article made by the local gun-maker of a neighbouring country town. The moral that I deduce from all this is that the ten-guinea machine, except in exceptional cases, gives no profit to maker or agent, and that an article so bought is never satisfactory; that it is far better to give £5 or £6 more for a high-grade machine, and that it is better, if economy is an object, to buy a high-grade second-hand bicycle than a cheap new one.

FOULMART HUNTING

BY HENRY C. HOWARD

HUNTING the Foulmart, or polecat, was at one time a very popular pastime in certain parts of Cumberland, and it is a pity that it should now have been entirely given up. Whether with a younger generation of sportsmen early rising (a necessity if you want to kill the animal, and indeed generally, if you want a hunt at all) has been the chief cause of the decline and fall of this particular sport, or whether—as some assert—foulmarts have almost totally disappeared, I cannot say ; but, whatever the cause may be, as far as I know, there has been no foulmart hunted in Cumberland for twenty years.

And here let me confess that these notes are written without any personal experiences of the sport, and that I am indebted for all my information notably to Colonel Wybergh, to Mr. G. Dixon, of Armenthwaite Hall, to Mr. Francis Wybergh, and to Mr. Coward, of Carlisle, all of whom were among the keenest sportsmen in the days when foulmart hunting flourished, and of whom it might be said that they hunted from January 1st till December 31st, for when foulmart hunting ended otter hunting began, and when it was too cold for otter hunting fox hunting was in full swing.[1] To attempt to give in these notes a full description of the character and the habits of the foulmart would be out of place, but it might be as well to preface the story of his chase with a few remarks upon his habits, and the season of the year during which he was hunted, &c.

To strike the drag in the early morning, low-lying, boggy land, or waste land covered with heather, was usually tried. During the hunting season the foulmart's usual lairs were stone

[1] I have also to thank Mr. Mordaunt Lawson, who has been indefatigable in collecting authentic information.

drains, stone heaps, and old barns, although he might be marked into his own particular earth, in which case, if it were decided to try and oust him, a long dig almost inevitably followed. Contrary to the idea which the name of foulmart suggests, I find all authorities, without exception, agree in describing him as a very clean animal. His lair, or bield, always contained three separate rooms ; his sleeping-berth, his eating-room, and larder being quite distinct. Eels, frogs, frog-spawn, small birds, rabbits and hedgehogs all formed delicacies to his palate, and there is no doubt he had a thrifty and frugal mind, as fresh provisions have often been found in his larder, stored up against a time when he might find them difficult to obtain. Mr. Coward told me that on one occasion, when digging out a foulmart's lair, they came on five live eels, which they promptly took to the nearest public-house and had cooked for breakfast, after which they returned and, digging out the foulmart, killed him.

Otter hounds were always used for this sport, and there appear to have been four or five different packs at one time, the most widely known and best established being, probably, the Reverend Hilton Wybergh's, of Isel ; but, in addition to his pack, packs were kept at Aspatria and Wigton, and two or three separate and rival establishments were also to be found at Carlisle.

All foulmart hunters agree that you should not take out more than eight couples of hounds, and some of the best authorities on the subject declare that a couple of good hounds are really all that are required, but, of course, two or three of the very best terriers are a necessity.

March, April, and May were probably the cream of the season for the sport, but the Carlisle hounds often began their season with the New Year, always, however, finishing about the beginning or middle of May. The earlier you were at the meeting-place after daylight the better, for although the foulmart's scent is very strong, some time might elapse before a drag was struck.

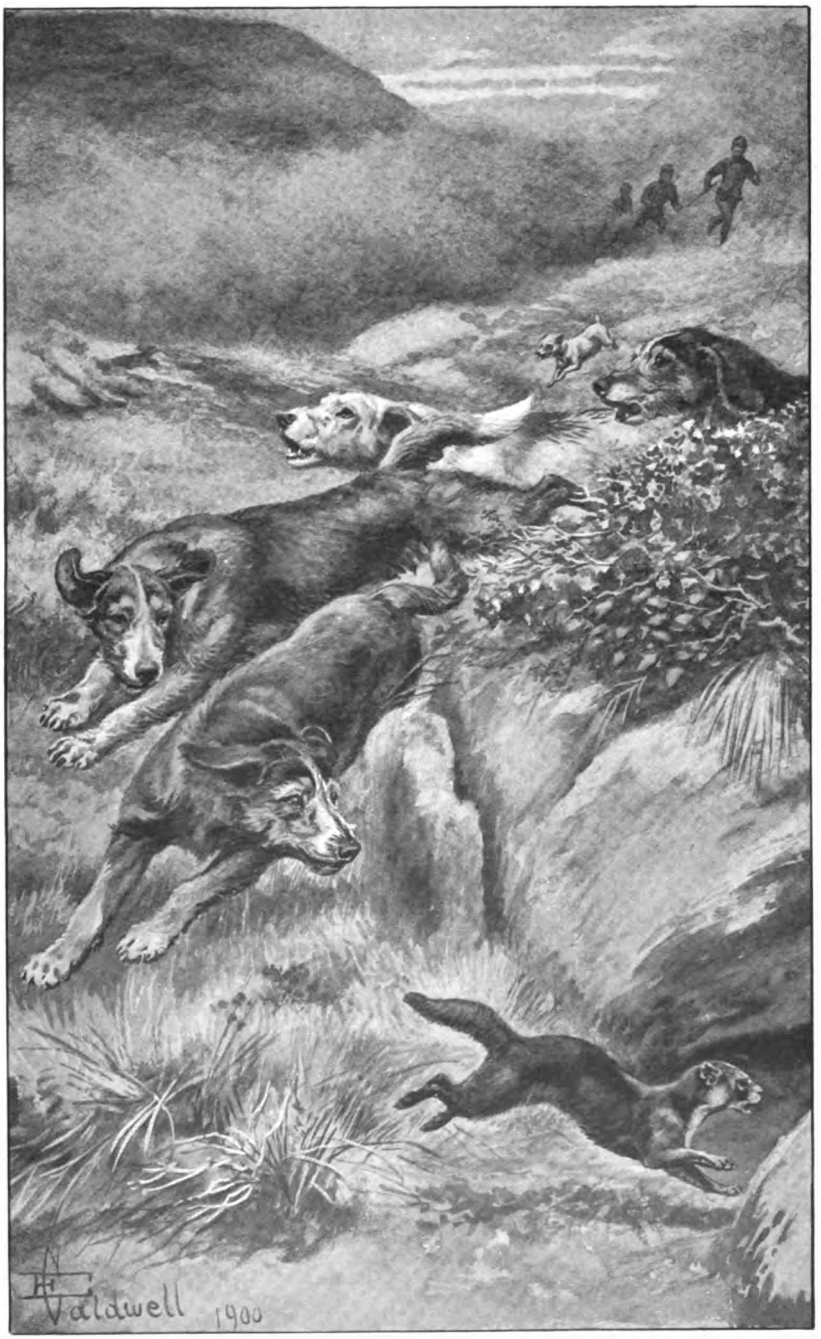
In the spring of the year, the 'Hob,' or dog-foulmart, was inclined to wander over a large area of country, and it was no uncommon occurrence to run a point of seven or eight miles, or sometimes even more. If the drag was struck early in the morning the pace was very hot, and both fast running and long staying powers were required to see much of the hunt, but I fancy the generality of runs were more of a steady and sober character, and it was possible to admire the working of the

hounds and the beauty of the country without exerting oneself very much. As a rule the country hunted consisted of bog and hill, so that horses were out of the question, and a good pair of legs, a stout heart, and a strong stick were the indispensables of this sport. And that it was no child's play to follow foulmart hounds, and *see the sport*, must be evident to all who know the rough, boggy country lying between Skiddaw on one side and the Wythop fells on the other, or else the floes and bogs which run down from Wigton to the Solway, and which extended more or less to within a few miles of Carlisle. I asked Mr. Coward if he could tell me which was the longest run he remembered. He at once mentioned two, of both of which he had a lively recollection: in one case they hit the drag at 4.30 A.M., and had to stop hounds at 11.30 on account of the heat—probably the hounds did not require much stopping. On this occasion two hounds were left with some of the hunters in the neighbourhood, and they were given instructions to try a narrow circle of country on the following night, taking as their centre the point where the hounds had been stopped, and if they failed to hit the foulmart off, then to extend the circle again the next night. These instructions were followed carefully, and with success, for on the second night the drag was again taken, and the foulmart marked in a small 'bask' hole, from which he was soon ejected and killed.

The other great run of which Mr. Coward spoke lasted from 5.30 A.M. till 2 P.M., when the weary hunters found themselves about four miles from Carlisle. They lay down and rested a bit, and so tired and stiff were they that when they roused themselves, and set off on their homeward march, the four miles into Carlisle took them four hours to accomplish.

The foulmart scent being a very strong one was in most ways a great advantage, as hounds could run the trail easily hours after the animal had passed; but, *per contra*, it had the disadvantage that hounds often struck the drag heel-way, and after a long hunt the sportsmen would find, to their disgust, that they were only at the beginning, and not, as they fondly imagined, at the end of their labours.

A curious incident that I have heard told was as follows: Hounds on being let out of kennels struck a drag at once, and a long run ensued, finishing on Skiddaw, or rather I should perhaps have said, beginning there, as it was from Skiddaw that the quarry had started on her wanderings: so the return journey had to be undertaken, and on arrival at the kennels, the foul-



THE PACE WAS VERY HOT

mart was discovered actually lying under the building from which hounds had set off in the morning!

Two stories told by Mr. F. Wybergh are well worth recording.

One morning at Isel (he says) they found a mark immediately, in a large stone heap. The foulmart bolted, and was immediately killed. (Mr. Wybergh adds he only knew two instances of foulmart bolting in this way.) Directly he was killed the hounds went away as hard as they could go for a distance of some four miles, over the Haigh, nearly to Cockermouth, and straight back to the same stone heap where they had killed in the morning. So the animal was killed first and hunted afterwards!

On another occasion Mr. Wybergh was asked by a lady living near Arkleby to bring his hounds and, if possible, kill a foulmart which was making 'sad work' among her young ducks. Desiring to gratify this lady, the hounds were shortly after taken there one morning at 8, and a line was immediately hit off from a cat-hole in the barn close by. A long circle was run at a good pace, eventually returning to the same cat-hole. The hay in the barn was then moved, and Mr. Wybergh says they soon killed the largest foulmart he ever saw.

Sometimes hounds would get on the line of a stoat, but the experienced huntsman knew directly when this occurred, and if his judgment failed, the old hounds were there to put him right; for the run of a stoat, being crooked and zigzaggy, was very different to that of the foulmart, who practically took a direct course, thus enabling a sportsman to judge directly if hounds had struck the right course or not. The greatest difficulty lay in teaching hounds to mark properly. A foulmart might have gone into the earth and gone on, or in a big lair his ramifications would be so numerous that you required above all steady markers, who would show you where to dig.

Tom Parker, whose son now hunts the Carlisle otter hounds, also kept some foulmart hounds. When he first started, he came home time after time without having killed his game, and was in consequence subjected to a good deal of chaff by his fellow sportsmen. Determined to succeed, however, in his object, he spent a summer hunting water-rats, teaching his hounds to mark or set them in the river bank, and then digging them out. After that experience he says the hounds never looked behind them, and could account for their foulmarts as well as any other pack. Sandy, the old Carlisle otter huntsman, also tried his hand as a foulmart hunter, but so far as I can

learn, not with such success as he met with when otter hunting. Billy Robinson, nicknamed 'Uncle,' a butcher in Carlisle, was another of the band of ardent sportsmen, always ready and eager for the fray. A shoemaker, named Kew, was another, and from the account of him given to me, he was inclined to be argumentative, and I was told his character was best expressed in the following lines, taken from an old hunting ditty :

> While Jack Dockray was fratching[1] with Shoemaker Kew,
> The otter shot off and again was in view.
> Hark forward, my lads!

Foulmarts were also hunted near Ennerdale and in the West of Cumberland, but according to the evidence of Mr. Joseph Braithwaite, of Nether Wastdale, the last was killed in Ennerdale about forty years ago.

Good authorities attribute the disappearance of foulmarts in these parts to the introduction of steel traps, as they are very easily trapped, but I cannot myself help thinking that the great number of rival packs which were kept for some years between Carlisle and Silloth must very considerably have reduced their number, as, from what I could learn, very few days passed without one or more packs being out on the warpath, each one desirous of scoring over his rivals, and it seems rather curious that the sport should have dropped out all at once, after being carried on for a number of years, during which time the country was very much over-hunted, and there appear to have been as many hounds as hunters.

Probably few of the packs could equal Mr. Coward's record of kills. He told me he killed six in the first season, ten in the second, and thirty-nine in the third. One curious custom attaching to the kill was that the poorest man in the hunt was given the skin as his perquisite, for which the orthodox market price was two-and-sixpence. History does not relate whether there was much 'fratching' as to who should take the skin, or in what way this knotty point was to be settled.

One more story of Mr. Coward's, and then I will finish.

One Easter he had been out on Burgh Marsh and got his game marked near Easton Village. Hounds were setting to it beautifully, and he was starting operations for digging when the proprietor of the land came up and asked 'who was going to mend those dykes?' Mr. Coward (affecting deafness) answered, 'Nay, it's not train time yet.' The proprietor then again repeated

[1] 'Fratching' means quarrelling, or arguing.

his question in an angry tone of voice. Mr. Coward put his hand to his ear, and said, 'I think we'd be better if we'd a sup of rain.' This went on—he engaging the proprietor's attention —while the hounds were busily working away at the earth, and in due time they had the foulmart out, and after a short course he was soon killed, the proprietor being as keen as any of them. When all was over, Mr. Coward returned to the earth, and proceeded to repair the fence. Back came the proprietor, who by signs told him that he need not trouble. 'But,' answered Mr. Coward, 'if I don't do it who's to mend the dykes?' The proprietor evinced great astonishment, and exclaimed, 'What, thoo's not deaf then?' After due explanation a cordial invitation to come again another morning was given and warmly accepted.

PAGES FROM A COUNTRY DIARY

April 1.—I am a consistent supporter of most customs hallowed by antiquity : I eat pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, and goose on Michaelmas Day ; I raise no objection to the annual display of amateur pyrotechny which takes place in the stable-yard on November 5 ; I turn the money in my pocket when I see the new moon ; and I accept with profound caution all statements made to me before noon to-day. That other members of my establishment share this feeling of circumspection was unexpectedly revealed to me this morning, for having occasion to desire the presence of Thomas the gardener, I sent a message to him to that effect by Mary the housemaid ; and my window being open I was the unseen auditor of the following colloquy. Thomas is not only an old bachelor and a misogynist, but is at perpetual variance with the maidservants, against whom he constantly prefers more or less well founded charges of larceny of fruit or flowers. Consequently, Mary, gathering her skirts about her ankles as though in the neighbourhood of some unclean animal, approaches Thomas, engaged in his usual Sunday morning occupation of pottering about the cucumber frames, and addresses him in that shrill, peculiarly aggravating tone adopted by the gentler sex of the lower classes when giving an order to any one they dislike :

'Thomas, the master wishes to see you *at once*.'

The old gentleman paid not the slightest heed to this com-

mand, but placidly continued his work as though unconscious of any person being in his vicinity. Then Mary still more shrilly, 'Thomas, do you hear me! The master wishes to see you *at once*.' Again absolute indifference on the part of Thomas, but after a third summons accompanied by a stamp of the foot, he turned slowly round, and glaring angry-eyed at his tormentress, informed her in language more forcible than I can reproduce verbatim that when she had seen as many April fool's days as he, experience would teach her not to try and play 'monkey's tricks' on her betters!

April 5.—With Belinda to the Hunt Steeplechases, an annual festivity regarded by the young ladies of all classes in the country-side with much the same feeling as is Ascot by their more fashionable sisters of the London season. The most gorgeous of hats, the most knowing of tailor-made costumes are prepared for the occasion; and dire is the mortification felt equally in hall and farmhouse when the day turns out wet.

To day, however, the weather was all that could be desired, and everything passed off well, even to the extent of fortune favouring my exceedingly modest speculations. The days have long passed for me when I could conceive no more maddening music than the 'shouting of the captains,' and I have arrived at that philosophical time of life when it is possible to place the curb of discretion in the mouth of inclination, and to obtain as much gratification in hazarding a few shillings on the comparative speed of two inferior steeplechase horses as might formerly have been obtained by the investment of as many pounds on the favourite for the Derby. Moreover, I now receive much inward gratification to which I was formerly a stranger by the flutter which my speculations excite in Belinda's bosom. Like all women she is at heart a gambler, but she is equally possessed by the feminine fondness for small economies, and with her the fear of losing more than counterbalances the hope of winning

I must confess I thoroughly enjoy these little provincial steeplechases, which partake more of the nature of a picnic than of a race meeting: true, the sport judged by Liverpool standard may not be very high-class, but after all one horse race is very like another; while if the jockeyship displayed is not very brilliant—one rider this afternoon completed the last three furlongs of the course astride his horse's withers in front of his saddle—it at all events adds to the gaiety of the spectators. The most amusing race of the day is the one for tenant farmers who hunt with the local hounds, for this invariably brings

forth some astounding exhibitions of horseflesh, horsemanship, and costume. It is a point of honour among the competitors to go the whole three miles at top-speed from start to finish; to complete the full course no matter how long they take in doing so, and even if a dozen horses have passed the post in front of them to indulge in a punishing finish up the straight.

April 9.—I had arranged to go to the Point-to-Point races at X—— to-day, but the morning turning out wet, I not very unwillingly decided to stay at home, for this is a form of sport to which I am not particularly addicted. I should dearly like to see a revival of the original form of steeplechase when men were set to find their way over so many miles of 'unflagged' country to some famous landmark, but I confess that the attempt to combine this idea with that of the modern steeplechase meeting does not appeal to me. I am told that nowadays the country does not lend itself to 'blindfold' racing: high farming, the increase of population and the growth of railways are all urged as insuperable obstacles; but I am afraid that the real impediment lies in the refusal of the youth of the present generation to play except to a gallery. My experience of the ordinary Point-to-Point race is that it is invariably arranged with a view to this, and that it would be dubbed very poor fun were such not the case. My humble opinion is that a Point-to-Point steeplechase should be a purely and severely sporting event, requiring neither the presence of a band, nor a ring, nor of waggonettes full of beautiful ladies dispensing lunch, all of which were deemed necessary adjuncts to the last meeting of this nature I attended; but as I gave a shilling to the band, lost a sovereign to a gentleman in a white opera hat and suit of shepherds plaid check, and partook greedily of a free and most excellent lunch, I am afraid I can hardly be held to practise what I preach.

It cleared up in the afternoon and I walked into M—— to buy some sealing wax—I am nearly as far from a lemon as was Sydney Smith. Overtaken by a heavy shower on my way home I sought shelter under a hedge, where I was presently joined by another wayfarer, a sort of better class tramp, with whom I entered into conversation over a pipe of my tobacco, and found him most excellent company. He was, it appeared, a cartwright by vocation, but a wanderer—or as he preferred to poetically style himself—a rolling-stone, by predilection. Indeed, he harped so persistently on his 'rolling' propensities that I at last began to fancy that I had had the rare good

THE TENANT FARMERS' RACE

fortune to fall in with a sort of modern Marco Polo, and by way of leading up to some interesting anecdotes of America or the Antipodes, asked my new acquaintance if he had ever been out of England. 'Oh yes,' he answered cheerfully, 'I was once three months *in the Isle of Wight.*'

April 17.—It has always been a moot point with me whether keener pleasure be felt by the dweller in great cities who takes a holiday in the country, or *cæteris paribus* by the denizen of the latter when visiting the town. In the days of my youth when I used to inhabit the metropolis for more or less long periods of time, I would have unhesitatingly pronounced in favour of the former, but now that I spend most of the year in the country I have considerably modified my opinion. Consequently, when Belinda, fired by an announcement that her dressmaker had just returned from a visit to Paris, proposed a jaunt to London, I assented, by no means unwillingly, having business of my own to attend to, and being moreover hopeful that the east wind might rage less furiously in the metropolis than it does here.

It is certainly pleasant to wake up in London on a fine spring morning knowing that the day is your own, and while breakfasting lightly off the crisp French roll unobtainable in the country to skim the pages of the newspaper which at home does not reach you until the afternoon. The roar of the traffic and the selection from the last Gaiety burlesque, which a piano organ is playing round the corner, maddening and nerve-destroying as they may be to the habitual Londoner, merely serve to raise your spirits, and it is with a feeling of pleasurable anticipation that you presently sally forth to taste that rare pleasure, only enjoyed in its perfection by the bucolic mind, of staring into shop windows. Not I am afraid that Belinda contents herself with mere exterior inspection of these, judging at least by the quantity of cardboard boxes and paper parcels that daily arrive at our lodgings.

How grateful too the comforts of one's club; the well-drilled servants; the latest number of your favourite magazine and the earliest news from the front; the sumptuous lunch at a cost of a couple of shillings, the easy chair and the coffee and cigar—luxuries only permitted on Sunday afternoons at home. Small wonder if the country member marvels how he ever came to quit the 'sweet shady side of Pall Mall.'

Equally soothing to the jaded rustic who for months past has found his only relaxation from a *tête-à-tête* dinner at home

in the tedious if respectable country dinner-party, to take his evening meal in a cheerful, well-lighted restaurant filled with amusing, well-dressed—and let us charitably assume, respectable—people, and afterwards to summon the swift hansom and drive through the roaring Strand to the theatre of his choice.

I tasted all these simple pleasures to the full; I shopped, I idled pleasantly about—why is there no English equivalent of *flâneur?* I met old friends and paid 'duty' calls on London relatives; I dined and supped and went to the theatre, I spent my time exactly as I listed, and then, like Maeldune, and for probably the same reason, I

Began to be weary, to sigh, and to stretch, and to yawn.

I ceased to take any further interest in shop windows or picture galleries; I no longer stopped, open-mouthed, to gaze at a horse down on the asphalte, or the sentries being relieved in Pall Mall; the club felt stuffy and the theatres reeked of gas; the peculiar smell of the London streets, half stable and half chloride of lime, hung constant in my nostrils; the ceaseless roar and clatter of the traffic oppressed me, and leaving Belinda behind to pay a round of visits alone, I fled home to the country.

I reached home late last night, and this morning, after a leisurely breakfast which included at least one dainty absolutely unobtainable in London, a new laid egg to wit, I decided, after the usual visit to the stable, and a potter round the garden fragrant with the perfume of wallflowers and narcissus, on a morning's fishing as the most complete antidote to my recent dissipations. It was one of those perfect days when all nature seems to rejoice in the caress of spring; the tender green corn was all 'a-blowing and a-growing'; and the cattle in the pastures were feeding 'forty like one' on the fresh young grass; the lambs were busy organising endless series of running and jumping competitions, and the peewits were screaming and swooping over the dusty fallows; while overhead little fleecy white clouds were drifting across a light blue sky before the breath of the gentle west wind.

Then, too, the delicious harmonies of the young foliage of the trees! How delicately the variations ranged from the more sombre tints of the sycamore and the chestnut, through the yellow of the oak and the soft grey of the birch, to the exquisitely vivid green of the larch and balsam poplar. Alone the cautious ash, like some misanthrope who has inadverently strayed into

a holiday crowd, refused to put forth the faintest tinge of verdure, and awaits the full glow of June before it indues its short-lived foliage.

> Delaying, as the tender ash delays,
> To clothe herself when all the trees are green.

It was good to be abroad on such a morning, and as I waded into the cool brown water of the beck flashing and rippling over its shallow, I drew a long breath of air free from the taint of a million other lungs, and thanked God I was a countryman.

April 22.—I basely took advantage of Belinda's protracted absence from home to abstain from attendance at church this morning and walked over to lunch with A., who told me a good story of his Irish keeper. A. got a snap-shot—both barrels—at a cock disappearing round the corner of a covert, and not knowing whether he had hit or missed, turned to his attendant and asked: 'Did I get that bird?' 'Ye did, sorr,' replied the keeper, 'ye sthruck ut with the second *retaliation*.'

April 23.—To Petty Sessions, where an incident occurred which showed at once the smallness of the world and the largeness of the British Empire. My coadjutor on the bench was B., a retired Colonel of the Foot, who for many years of his life served her Majesty in various parts of the globe. Before us was presently arraigned John Smith, labourer, of no fixed address, charged with the heinous offence of sleeping in Farmer Turnbull's straw-barn. He stood motionless and indifferent while the policeman in the witness-box detailed how 'in consequence of information received he proceeded in the direction of Mr. Turnbull's farm'—a policeman never *goes* to a place; he proceeds in its direction—and found the prisoner asleep in the straw; of how the man used bad language when awakened—as who would not under the circumstances?—but went quietly to the lock-up; of how he charged him, and searched him, and found on him three halfpence and a pipe, but no tobacco.

And then came the question what to do with him? It is always hard to deal with these homeless and hopeless outcasts, who, as often as not, have drifted into their present state through sheer ill-fortune; and I, for one, can never meet them shambling along the roads in their burst boots without thinking of the words of the wise old preacher: 'There but for the grace of God goes Richard Baxter.' There was nothing about John

Smith, ragged, collarless and unshorn, to suggest to me that he had ever been anything else but a tramp, but something about the way he folded his hands in front of him, as he stood in the dock, caught B.'s practised eye.

'You have been in the army, haven't you?' he asked.

It was curious to see how the man came to attention; his shoulders straightened, his hands dropped instinctively to his sides, and he looked hard at B. as he answered 'Yes.'

'What regiment were you in?' 'The —th Fusiliers' (B.'s old regiment).—'When were you discharged?' 'At Allahabad in 1887.'—'What company were you in?' 'B company.'—'Who was your captain?' 'You were, sir!'

And then encouraged to speak, John Smith told his story of how he had served twelve years with the colours and been through the Burmese war; of how he had once got his stripes and lost them through 'a matter of drink'; of how he had come home and married and settled down to steady work for nearly ten years; of how sickness had come on him and his wife, culminating in her death and the loss of his work; of how his home had been broken up and he had come down in the world; finally, how he had left his child with a compassionate friend in London, and was tramping to Carlisle, where he had good hopes of getting employment.

It was a pitiful tale, and I fear not an uncommon one. Here was a man—it might have been Private Stanley Ortheris himself, for his speech betrayed him as a Cockney, who had

> heard the revelly
> From Birr to Bareilly,

who had seen strange countries and stranger men, who had marched and fought beneath tropical suns, and added his tiny brick to the great edifice of the Empire; now homeless and penniless, walking three hundred miles to get work; while I who had only fulfilled the obligations of citizenship by paying taxes (and grumbling at doing so), was sitting in judgment on him, and ought, if I did my duty, to send him to prison for fourteen days!

But this was not to be, and so John Smith, formerly full private in Her Majesty's —th Regiment of Fusiliers, and now labourer, of no fixed address, was dismissed with a caution, and also, I have reason to believe, with a small packet the contents of which would enable him to add tobacco to the lonely pipe in his pocket, and to reach Carlisle by rail.

April 27.—Last night I dined and slept at C.'s, who has just returned from two years of sport and travel in the Far East. As may be imagined, he proved most entertaining company, and kept me up to such an hour in the smoking-room as made me feel on awaking this morning as if I were still in London. As most of his adventures will, I believe, appear in book form ere long, I do not feel justified in retailing any of them here, great as is the temptation to do so, but I cannot forbear quoting one little anecdote illustrative of the different light in which the same thing strikes the Anglo-Saxon and Gallic mind.

When in India, C., a British subaltern, and a French globe-trotter with whom they had temporarily foregathered, happened to be travelling in the same railway carriage. In the course of their journey the train ran through a particularly dense patch of jungle. Quoth the subaltern, gazing critically out of the right-hand window, 'That would be an awkward place to force a boar out of.' Shrieked the Frenchman, in a crescendo note of admiration, as he looked out of the window on *his* side, 'Ah! mon Dieu. Regardez donc, mes amis, *quel luxe de végétation!*'

On another occasion C. was travelling on a Messageries Maritimes boat, and, finding time hang heavy on his hands, he got his battery up on deck and proceeded carefully to oil his rifles. A certain French Colonel of Tirailleurs who happened to be on board, was much struck by an 8-bore rifle, and asked for what purpose he used such an enormous 'carabine.' 'Pour la chasse aux éléphants,' replied C. 'La chasse aux éléphants,' repeated the Colonel in a tone in which incredulity mingled with admiration; 'sapristi! voilà *une chasse d'émotion!*'

April 30.—To-day I rode over to H——, about ten miles from here, to witness the inauguration of some new golf links. In making this expedition I was more prompted by the fineness of the day and the prospect of meeting my friends than by any extraordinary affection for the game of golf. Not that, on the other hand, I have any special dislike to it. Like the Meltonian who, when asked if he was fond of shooting, replied 'he didn't mind it when there was no hunting,' so do I rather enjoy a game of golf when I can find nothing better to do; and, noticing the fervour with which the pastime is followed by its more elderly votaries, I feel that the day cannot now be far distant when I shall come to regard it with positive affection. No, my chief objection to the modern craze for the game is the way in which it has ruined—to my egotistical mind, at least—so many formerly delightfully quiet bits of country. This very

common at H—— is a case in point. It used to be a fine breezy bit of gorse-grown upland, over which as a boy I had leave from old Mr. P., the lord of the manor, to roam in search of birds' nests; or later, when I became promoted to a gun, in pursuit of the occasional snipe or still more occasional rabbit. One could spend a whole afternoon there and never meet another soul. Now it has been given over to a swarm of red-jacketed fanatics from the nearest town, who, not content with ruthlessly uprooting the gorse, have further desecrated the face of nature by digging artificial 'bunkers' and erecting a hideous iron pavilion, while the small boys of the district are seduced from their legitimate agricultural vocations to become 'caddies.'

Worse still, this new departure draws the young men away from the cricket field. I verily believe golf does as much harm to cricket among the upper classes as bicycling does to volunteering among the lower ones. Had I the powers of a Dictator I would make it a penal offence for any Englishman under the age of twenty-five to play golf (I would make an exception in favour of Scotchmen as following hereditary instinct), for even its most ardent votaries must allow that golf does not call forth those qualities of nerve, unselfishness, and personal courage demanded by the nobler game?

In giving vent to the above diatribe, I feel rather a graceless individual, for I spent a most cheery afternoon at H—— among the 'red-jacketed fanatics,' and enjoyed a most excellent lunch at their expense in the odious iron pavilion, where, needless to remark, I kept my abominable sentiments to myself.

NOTES ON A LATTER-DAY HUNTING TRIP IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS[1]

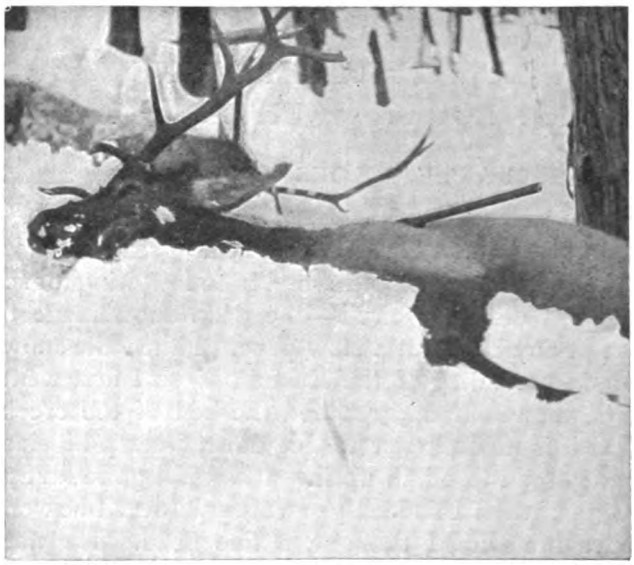
BY F. C. SELOUS

It was now getting late, and although I was at no great distance from camp—for the wounded wapiti I had been following for so many hours had led me in a circle—the deep snow made it difficult to move at anything but a slow pace. I knew the snow was not so deep in the valley of the East Fork, so I first went straight down the mountain, and reached the bed of the creek pretty quickly, as it is much easier to get down a steep hillside covered with snow, than to climb up it. I had not gone half a mile along the creek when I suddenly saw a mule deer buck on the hillside above me with, I thought, a fine head. He was standing about 100 yards away, half facing me, and gazing steadily in my direction. I fired at him immediately, and though he turned and, dashing away, was lost to sight very quickly amongst the trees, I felt sure I had hit him, and did not think he would go very far. And so it proved, for I found him lying quite dead not far away, my bullet having struck him at the point of the left shoulder, and torn a big hole through his heart. He was a prime buck in splendid condition, but though one of his horns was quite handsome the other was malformed, and spoiled what would otherwise have been a fine head. By the time I had cleaned the carcase and laid it out on the snow it was getting dusk, and as I was still some miles from camp I did not get there till long after dark. This was the best day I had in the Rocky Mountains, and a very tiring one too, owing to the depth of the snow on the higher parts of

[1] Copyright 1900, by F. C. Selous.

the mountains, though I had walked quite a small distance in mileage.

On the following day Graham and I went and fetched in the wapiti heads and the carcases of the mule deer with pack ponies. We had to leave the ponies near the creek, and then climb the mountain to where the two wapiti were lying, and then find the deer, and it was late when we got the heads and neck skins of the former, and the carcases of the latter down to the ponies. We did not carry them, but slid them down the steep mountain side on the snow. They never went far at a time before being stopped by a tree. The carcases of the wapiti were afterwards used by a trapper for bait. The meat of wapiti bulls which are shot in the Rocky Mountains for their heads is almost always wasted, I am sorry to say, or at the best used for bear bait, as no one will eat it in the late autumn if he can get deer or sheep meat.



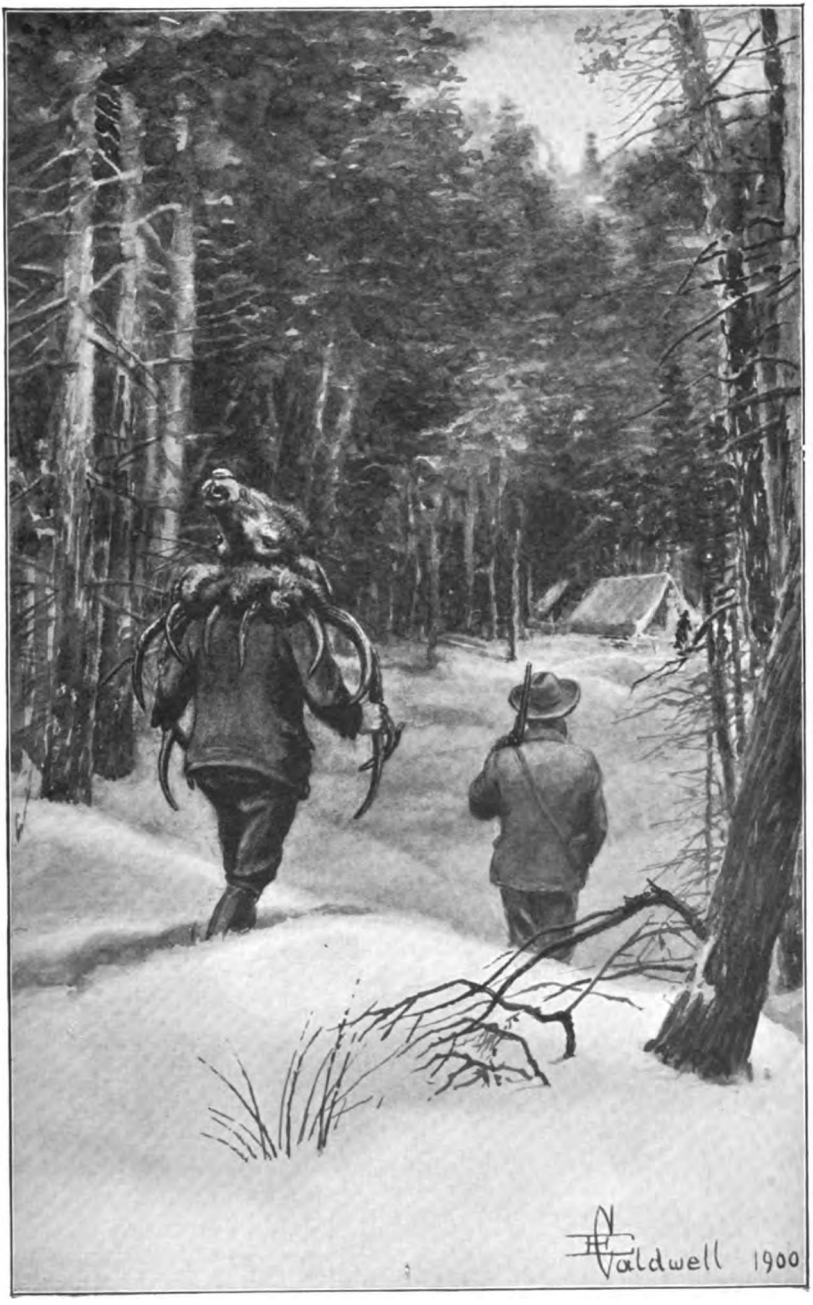
YOUNG WAPITI BULL, SHOT IN THE DEEP SNOW, OCT. 1897

On the following day, October 20, I again went out alone, and coming on some fresh wapiti tracks, followed them, and came nicely up to seven hinds in rather open ground high up on the mountain side. There was no bull with them, however, so I did not interfere with them.

On October 21 I went out with Graham, and we had not ascended the valley of the main river above our camp for more than a couple of miles when we came on the track of a wapiti stag, which seemed to have passed the preceding evening. We soon saw that there was something wrong with one of his forelegs, which was either broken or injured in such a way that he

could not put his weight upon it. Now one might think that it would be a pretty easy matter to track up and overtake in deep snow so heavy an animal as a wapiti stag with a broken foreleg. I certainly thought so when we first found his track, but gradually became undeceived. After an hour's tracking—always going up-hill—we came to a place where the disabled beast had lain down during the night, and from which he had probably only risen at day dawn. He had chosen his resting place with wonderful cunning, close to the top of a piece of rising ground, where nothing could have approached him unseen, unheard or unsmelt. After this he went down to the East Fork Creek, crossed it, and then took straight up the side of a detached mountain, whose summit must have been some 3000 feet above the creek, and probably over 11,000 feet above sea level, as it rose above timber line, and was now a glittering cap of new fallen snow. I fancy that when we crossed the creek the great stag could not have been very far in front of us, and must have winded us, though we never saw him. He took straight up the mountain, and as we climbed on his tracks the snow grew deeper and deeper. The disabled beast now progressed in a series of bounds, always springing from his hind legs. Every bound lifted him clear of the snow, and carried him upwards over some eight or nine feet of ground. As we toiled slowly on his tracks I expected to see him standing dead beat at every instant, for I could not believe that so heavy an animal could long endure such tremendous exertion when handicapped with a broken foreleg. Suddenly, in a bit of thick timber—I was in front with my rifle held at the ready—I saw either a branch or a horn move, and knew it must be the latter as there was not a breath of wind stirring. I instantly ducked down and crawled through the snow to a fallen tree, and looking over it, could see a small piece of the rump of the beast we were following, and also a portion of its head, but every other part of its body was completely hidden by the stems of the pine trees. Something had attracted the animal's attention, and it was evidently standing listening. I did not care to fire an expanding bullet into its rump, and so crept out sideways along the trunk of the fallen tree, to try and get a view of its shoulder. But when I looked up again the stag was gone. Its delicate sense of hearing or sight or smell had given it warning of its enemies' near neighbourhood, and again it had struggled onwards, in a last desperate effort to shake off its pursuers. I never heard a sound, but the first few plunges of

the startled brute were prodigious. He always went upwards, and Graham foretold, that if he did not play out before he reached it, he would get to the top of the mountain, as he said it was much easier for a heavy animal with a broken foreleg to go up-hill in a series of bounds, always taken from the hind quarters, than to go down-hill, when all his weight would come on the one sound foreleg. As we ascended we went slower and slower, and took it in turns to 'break trail,' for we now sank over our knees at every step in the snow. For a long time I cherished the hope that the disabled wapiti would not be able to reach the top of the mountain, but after a time I began to think that he would, but that I wouldn't, for it was really most exhausting work getting through the deep snow. At last we reached the edge of the timber, and emerged upon the shining snow field that capped the mountain. On the very highest point the wapiti had lain down to rest, and although we did not see him he had probably seen us as we came out of the forest, and again dashed off. But now he could climb no higher, and had perforce therefore to commence the descent of the mountain. He very soon got into a very steep place, where at some former time an avalanche had swept down the mountain side, and cleared all the trees away in its path. This open ride through the forest was very steep, but covered deep with snow, so that it was easy work for Graham and myself to get down it, but must have been a terrible strain on the disabled wapiti. We must have come down a thousand feet from the top of the mountain when we suddenly saw him. He was lying down in the snow, on a small level shoulder of ground in the path of the avalanche, and, cunning to the last, was facing back the way he had come, so as to command a view of anything coming on his tracks. As we saw him he must, I think, have seen us, but we were only just in sight, and must have been quite 200 yards above him, and he was probably too deadly tired to move again until it was absolutely necessary. After the great exertions I had made I did not feel very steady, but at once sat down, and putting up the 200 yards sight, fired down straight at his chest, which was, however, covered to a considerable extent by his head and face. This bullet, as we afterwards found, struck him on the lower lip just below the teeth, broke his jaw, and went on into his chest, where it just penetrated through the skin. He at once struggled to his feet, and with a plunge got amongst the timber. Coming down to where he had been lying we found blood at



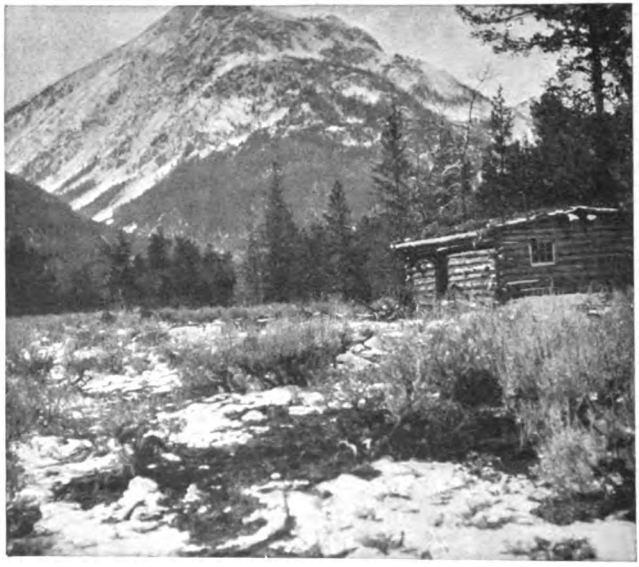
RETURNING TO CAMP AFTER DARK

once, and following it soon saw the wounded beast standing amongst the pine trees utterly exhausted. A bullet through the lungs put an end to his troubles. He was a fine big bull, with a pretty, medium-sized head of twelve points. The bone of his left foreleg was broken about six inches above the knee joint. At first I thought the injury must have been caused by a bullet, but a careful examination assured me that this was not the case, as there was no sign of a bullet hole in the skin. Then I cut the injured leg open, and found that the break had every appearance of being quite fresh, as there was no sign of swelling or inflammation, and only a little freshly extravasated blood. How this stag got his leg broken is a mystery to me, Graham's suggestion that he had been knocked over a cliff by another stag not seeming to me at all probable, as the rutting season was now over. After the difficulty we experienced in overtaking this three-legged wapiti I ceased to wonder at our non-success in coming up with sound animals of this species once they had been disturbed. We had actually been plodding through the deep snow for six hours on the tracks of this three-legged stag before we stood over his carcase. He had luckily brought us on to the side of the mountain overlooking the main valley of the Stinking Water River, and we were only a short distance in an aërial line from our camp; but we had a difficult and even a dangerous job to get the head home, as we were separated from the valley by some very precipitous rocky slopes. However, at last we got down to the level ground, and, crossing the river, finally reached camp just after dark.

On the following day I remained in camp during the morning, and skinned and prepared my wapiti heads. In the afternoon I went down to the river with my wife, and between us we caught a nice lot of trout. I caught several beautiful fish, weighing about 2 lbs. apiece, with an artificial minnow, and I noticed that they only went at this bait when the sun was shining brightly, and when, of course, it sparkled and glittered as it was drawn through the water. As long as the sun was obscured by clouds they would not look at it. They always rose more readily to flies, too, when the sun was shining brightly than at any other time. There is, I am glad to be able to say, a grand simplicity of character about the Rocky Mountain trout, and an obvious belief that things are really what they seem; qualities which cannot fail to endear him to the non-scientific but hungry angler, for he is a beautiful fish to eat, fat and well fed, and with delicate pink-coloured flesh.

On the following day I again went out hunting, but finding no tracks of either wapiti or deer, returned to camp early and caught a lot more trout.

On Sunday, October 24, we shifted camp down the river to the empty cabins at the mining camp, ten miles above Davies' ranche. The day was dull and cloudy and threatened snow. Whilst we were fixing camp Davies turned up from his ranche and stopped the night with us. He had come up to get one of the cabins ready for Colonel Cody, who was then at Cody City,



DESERTED CABIN AT OLD MINING CAMP, ROCKY MOUNTAINS, OCT. 1897

where he has large interests, but whom he expected shortly at his ranche, bent on an outing in one of his old hunting-grounds, from which, however, most of the glory has now departed.

On the following day it snowed all day long, so that Davies could not get home, and we were unable to move out of camp. The storm continued all night and the next morning till mid-day, when the sun came out. Davies then went home. In the afternoon I took a turn by myself up a gully known as Needle Creek, but saw nothing but a mule deer doe and two fawns, and no tracks of anything else. On returning to camp late in the evening I found that Davies had returned, bringing a letter to W. M., which contained news that compelled him to start at once for England.

Early the following morning our kind friend left us, accompanied by one of our men and a pack-horse, in order to reach Ishawood in time to catch the stage waggon, which runs daily between that place and Red Lodge station.

During the snow storm my wife and I lived in our tent, but we took our meals in one of the cabins, which we shared with a pair of pretty little nuthatches (*Sitta Canadensis*), a much smaller species than our English bird, and with a white stripe over the eye, and several mountain rats (*Nestoma cinerea*), beautiful large-eyed creatures, with great bushy tails like Brobdingnagian dormice. They, however, ate a lot of our stores, and took nearly all the trimmings off Davies' leather coat. In revenge we killed two of them, and I preserved the skin of the finest for our Natural History Museum at South Kensington.

On October 28 we moved down the river and pitched our tents close to Davies' cabin. On the way I shot two mule deer, a doe and a young buck, as Davies, who was not much of a hunter, had asked me to do my best to get him a supply of meat for the coming winter.

The next day I went up Cabin Creek with Graham, intending to look for sheep. Three or four miles from Davies' ranche there is a pretty little waterfall on this creek, some twenty feet in height, and as the precipitous rock wall over which the water tumbles runs right across the narrow valley of the stream, which is here bounded and shut in on both sides by very steep cliffs, it is a somewhat difficult matter to climb from below the waterfall into the valley of the creek above it; in fact, I don't think that anything but a sheep or a goat, or a man fairly well accustomed to rock climbing, could manage it. Graham and I climbed to a ledge on the cliffs above the falls on the right-hand side of the creek without much trouble, but it was just about all we could do, by the help of a fissure in the rock, to get down to the bed of the stream. Immediately we did so we struck the fresh tracks of a wapiti bull. He had evidently come down from the country at the head of Cabin Creek, where the snow must now have been very deep, with the intention of getting into the main valley of the Stinking Water River, but finding his further progress barred by the wall of rock running across the stream at the waterfall, had turned back again up the creek. We had tracked him for a couple of miles, sometimes along the bottom of the ravine and sometimes through the more or less forested slopes on either side of it, when we came to

a small piece of very thick timber lying in an angle between a precipice overhanging the main creek and a steep rocky gorge running into it at right angles. We did not follow the wapiti's tracks into this piece of dense pine-wood, but skirted it, until we reached the edge of the gorge I have spoken of above. A glance then showed us that no deer could have got down the almost precipitous rocks below us, and as we had not crossed a wapiti's track coming out of the timber and going higher up the mountain side, it was evident our game was in the patch of forest we had just skirted, for a sheer precipice cut off its descent to the main creek. To escape from its present position it would have to go back again the way it had come down the creek or come up the mountain side. As it had already been once stopped by the precipitous nature of the country at the waterfall, I thought it would adopt the latter course, and therefore took up a position as quickly as possible, from which I was able to command the hillside above the cover. Then Graham went and took up the tracks again. I expect the cunning old stag had already either heard or seen us, but feeling himself to be more or less cornered, was waiting in the cover to see what we were going to do. Graham never saw or heard him, and he did not come past me, but slipped off back down the creek again so quietly that if I had not just caught a glimpse of him going at a trot amongst the trees we should not have known what he had done until we had learnt it from his tracks in the snow. Shouting to Graham, I now ran and slid and clambered as hard as I could go diagonally downwards, until I struck the wapiti's tracks, and Graham joining me, we followed them as quickly as we could into the bed of the creek. We had got quite close to the falls, always following the wapiti's tracks, and Graham had just said, 'Well, I be doggoned, but I'm afraid he's beat us this time,' when I suddenly spied him, standing on the face of the cliff high above us. The poor animal, for the second time finding it impossible to pass the falls, had endeavoured to climb the mountain side to the right of them. A steep slope, covered for some fifty feet from the water's edge with pine trees, gave him no difficulty, but above this there was nothing but bare rock, not exactly precipitous, but still very steep. Up this he had managed to ascend for fifty feet or so, and could then apparently neither get higher nor come lower again. Looking up through the pine trees I saw him, and from his attitude I think he was watching us. I at once fired at him. I knew I had hit him, but he never moved, so slipping in another cartridge I fired

again. Both these bullets struck him in the chest, and just missing his heart pierced his lungs, and lay together under the skin at the top of his shoulder-blade, for I had fired almost straight upwards. For a moment yet the doomed beast stood

HEAD OF WAPITI, SHOT IN THE CABIN CREEK, NOV. 1897

still, then slowly lurching over, came rushing, a lifeless mass, down the cliff. He fell head first, and the first part of him to strike the snowy ground at the foot of the rock was his nose. Then the carcase slid down the steep slope amongst the pine trees, and did not stop until it had reached the bed of the creek close to where we stood above the waterfall. Only the point of one tine of the right-hand antler was injured. The sheerness of the cliff down which he fell had probably saved his horns,

for he touched nothing until his nose hit the steep snow slope at the foot of the bare rock. But the state of his nose, skull, and jawbone proved with what terrific violence he had struck the ground. The incisor teeth and the whole of the end of the lower jaw were gone, the remainder of the jaw bones being left separate from one another, whilst the skull was split from the nose right up to between the horns. The skin and flesh of the point of the jaw and nose were much split and smashed, but not nearly so much so as one would have expected from the state of the skull and jawbones.

This was by far the biggest-bodied and heaviest wapiti I shot, and he carried a very fair head, too, for nowadays. We found an easier way of getting down to the bed of the creek below the waterfall on the opposite side to that by which we had ascended, but it took us all our time to get the wapiti's head down.

On the following morning, as Davies wanted all the meat, we returned to the carcase of the wapiti with a couple of pack-horses, Davies and one of our men accompanying us. I took my small Austrian scale and some rope with me, and after having cut it up, we weighed the carcase carefully, and then lowered the various portions to below the falls with a rope.

The different sections weighed as follows :

Skin of head and neck (uncleaned) . .	7½ kilos.
Head and horns (without skin) . . .	20 ,,
Two hind quarters together . . .	78 ,,
Two shoulders together	50 ,,
Barrel (with all the inside, including lungs, liver and heart, removed) . . .	45 ,,
Neck and part of brisket	48 ,,
Skin	20 ,,
Total	331½ kilos.

This works out to 725 lbs. 2½ ozs., or 51 stone 11 lbs., and as this weight was taken after the rutting season, this particular wapiti might have weighed 60 stone clean when in very high condition, or possibly about 1100 lbs. live weight, for the gralloch, I have found, is about one-quarter of an animal's live weight, both with antelopes and deer. Although this was probably considerably the heaviest of the few wapiti bulls I shot, yet when it is considered that there now only exists a poor remnant of the enormous herds of these splendid animals which once existed in Western America, and that the few wapiti which still survive are now excluded from the rich pasturage of their

former winter ranges by the encroachments of civilised man, one can hardly help believing that wapiti bulls weighing 1200 lbs. as they stood must have been common some twenty years ago, whilst exceptional animals may have possibly very much exceeded this weight. Not many years ago the American wapiti was indisputably the finest deer in the world, both in size and weight of antlers, as well as in size and weight of body. He is probably still the heaviest deer in the world on the average, though the *finest* Hungarian and Caucasian red deer are heavier than the *average* wapiti of to-day, but I think it is doubtful whether the finest wapiti horns now obtainable in the Rocky Mountains are equal in weight to those of the finest red deer now living in Eastern Europe and Western Asia, or to the finest specimens of those of their nearer allies, the great deer of Central and Eastern Asia.

After having weighed the bull wapiti, Graham and I again went up Cabin Creek after wild sheep, and had a hard day's climbing but saw nothing, nor any fresh tracks. We got back to Davies about 5 P.M., and shortly afterwards one of our men saw an animal feeding on the side of the mountain right above the ranche. A look through the glasses showed that it was a wapiti bull. He had evidently been lying up in a patch of timber all day, and had just come out to feed. Of course he could see the ranche below him quite plainly, but as all the intervening ground was open I suppose he thought himself safe from molestation from that direction. I went after him alone, and had to first walk about a mile down the river, in order to be able to climb to a level with him out of view, and then approach him against the wind. I only just managed to get within shot of him, whilst there was still light enough to shoot, but at last I reached the edge of the piece of forest in which he had taken shelter during the day, and creeping to a rock on the open grass slope where he was busily feeding, killed him with a bullet through the heart at a distance of not more than 80 yards.

On the following day we brought the whole of the meat down to the ranche, and helped Davies to cut it up and dry it over fires for future use. I weighed this wapiti, and found him to be a very much lighter beast than the one I had shot two days previously, though he carried a very fair head of thirteen points, with a good spread, and a length of 48 inches. His total weight clean was 236 kilos, which works out to 36 stone 12 lbs. He would, of course, have weighed a few stone more

—probably upwards of 40 stone—when in high condition, for when I shot him, shortly after the rut, he was naturally much run down. Graham pronounced him to be an average-sized bull of about eight years old, and it is on this pronouncement that I have hazarded the suggestion that the *heaviest* red deer stags of the Caucasus and Eastern Europe, which attain to a weight of 45 stone clean, are heavier than the *average* wapiti bull of to-day.

On the following day, November 1, we packed all our traps on our waggon, and bidding good-bye to our kind friends at the

SETTLERS IN THE FAR WEST—DAVIES, WIFE, AND FATHER-IN-LAW

ranche, moved about six miles down the valley to the mouth of Boulder Creek. For any one fond of trout fishing, fresh bracing air and glorious mountain scenery I know of no pleasanter place than Davies' ranche. Any visitor there will meet with every assistance from Mr. and Mrs. Davies, who will be able to board and lodge them on reasonable terms if necessary. Mr. Davies' address is, Post Office, Ishawood, Wyoming, should any one who reads this think of visiting him, and wish first to communicate with him.

Not finding any game in Boulder Creek we moved further down the main stream to a small ranche occupied by a Texan immigrant, locally known as 'Timberline' Johnson. This man had just returned from a hunt on the North Fork, where he

said he had shot a moose and a number of elk, bulls and cows, whose skins he hoped to trade off during the winter to the Indians on the Crow Reservation. A discussion having subsequently arisen concerning the game laws of the State of Wyoming, Mr. Johnson frankly confessed his ignorance on this subject. 'He'd heard tell,' he said, 'that there were game laws, but they'd never troubled him much.' One of our men then expressed the opinion that all game laws in the United States were unconstitutional, as the game belonged to the people. Naturally, with such ideas abroad, the game is rapidly decreasing in this part of America, nor would it be possible to enforce the laws without the assistance of a very large staff of officials, for you can't prevent men from shooting wild animals in a wild country, where otherwise no fresh meat is obtainable, and my sympathies are all with the settlers in this matter, as long as they are not wasteful. If the Yellowstone National Park could be somewhat enlarged, so as to allow of a more extended winter range for the deer and elk, all the great game of North America, with the exception of the bison (which apparently does not thrive there), could be preserved for all time; but outside the limits of the park game is bound gradually to become scarcer and scarcer, in spite of laws for its preservation.

(*To be continued.*)

TWO POACHERS

BY THE COUNT DE SOISSONS

WE had hunted ten hours in the Pyrenees, Antonio Perez and myself, and, to tell the truth, our expedition had not been successful.

As soon as we entered the Vale of Wolves—a narrow gulch, called by this name owing to the great number of wolves found there during the winter—I had formed an exact idea of my companion, and, without being an experienced physiognomist, I had drawn the horoscope of my day merely by the gait of my guide.

Antonio Perez was a man about forty years old. He was a Catalonian refugee, to whom my friend, Baron Arthur de Pierpont, gave the position of huntsman, but who possessed no qualifications for this position, in spite of his claim to being a most dexterous toreador. Indolent as are the majority of Spaniards, he filled the duties of his position with the most scrupulous exactness, but without energy, without enthusiasm, as does a man who performs the functions of his profession merely because it gives him his living.

The day before some one had come to the château to tell us that a great bear had appeared in the pastures of Imola, and, after having killed two cows, had retired to a spot situated on the north-east side of the mountains. This news, of such importance to a sportsman, made no impression on Perez, who

listened with utter indifference to my conversation with the young shepherd who had come to tell us of the bear's appearance.

Such indifference spoke in anything but favour of the man. The next morning, when we started in pursuit of our quarry, accompanied by Ajax and Capello, two of the largest dogs to be had, and Bellerophon, the most courageous of lime-hounds, I told myself that with such a guide our adventuresome excursion would be without any great result. The ex-toreador of Madrid had neither nerves nor vigour.

As I did not know the paths, this being my first visit to the country, I was obliged to follow even such a guide. We started at four o'clock in the morning, and at noon had only reached the Plateau des Palombes. Instead of climbing up direct, which would have taken us no more than an hour, we made a long circuit in order to turn the mountain, and then we found no traces of the visitor of whose devastations we had been told. During our tramp we had seen only one *isard*[1] poised on the crest of a steep rock. A heath-cock, started by the dogs, perched not far from us, judging by his noisy flight, which at once stopped, but the foliage of green oaks amid which the bird fell was so thick that even with the eyes of a lynx it would have taken us a day or more to find him.

In the meantime the air was burning; then, little by little a dreadful calm succeeded the mysterious and confused voices which animated those wild solitudes. The smallest breeze stopped blowing, not a leaf moved at the top of the motionless larch-trees. Warm exhalations escaped, as from a raging furnace, from the granite rocks, and the imposing silence was broken only by the monotonous noise of the Wicks Falls. We saw numerous bands of wood-pigeons coming from all sides to take refuge in the forest.

'May St. Anthony help us!' bluntly said my hitherto silent companion. 'There, behind us, brews a dreadful storm, and if we do not make haste to seek some shelter it will surely catch us.'

He had not yet finished speaking when we saw a pale glimmer cut the heath, and heard a hollow noise coming from the shaken bowels of the earth.

I turned my head. The sky was frightful. Big, copper-coloured clouds gathered, and, slowly rotating, enveloped in a large network the whole south-west valley of Bearn; while above us

[1] The name given in the Pyrenees to the chamois.

still shone a pale ray of the sun; under our feet, by a rapid transition, was extended a cloud like a mourning veil, behind which roared the voice of the already approaching tempest. It was a magnificent spectacle. On the heights where we stood we could overlook the storm, but even my artistic enthusiasm did not cause me to quite forget the object of our expedition. Although the proverb says, 'One must not sell the hide of the bear before killing him,' I had made sure of having a slice of that bear for my supper; and I confess that, on looking at the threatening horizon, I regretfully renounced the hope of satisfying my appetite.

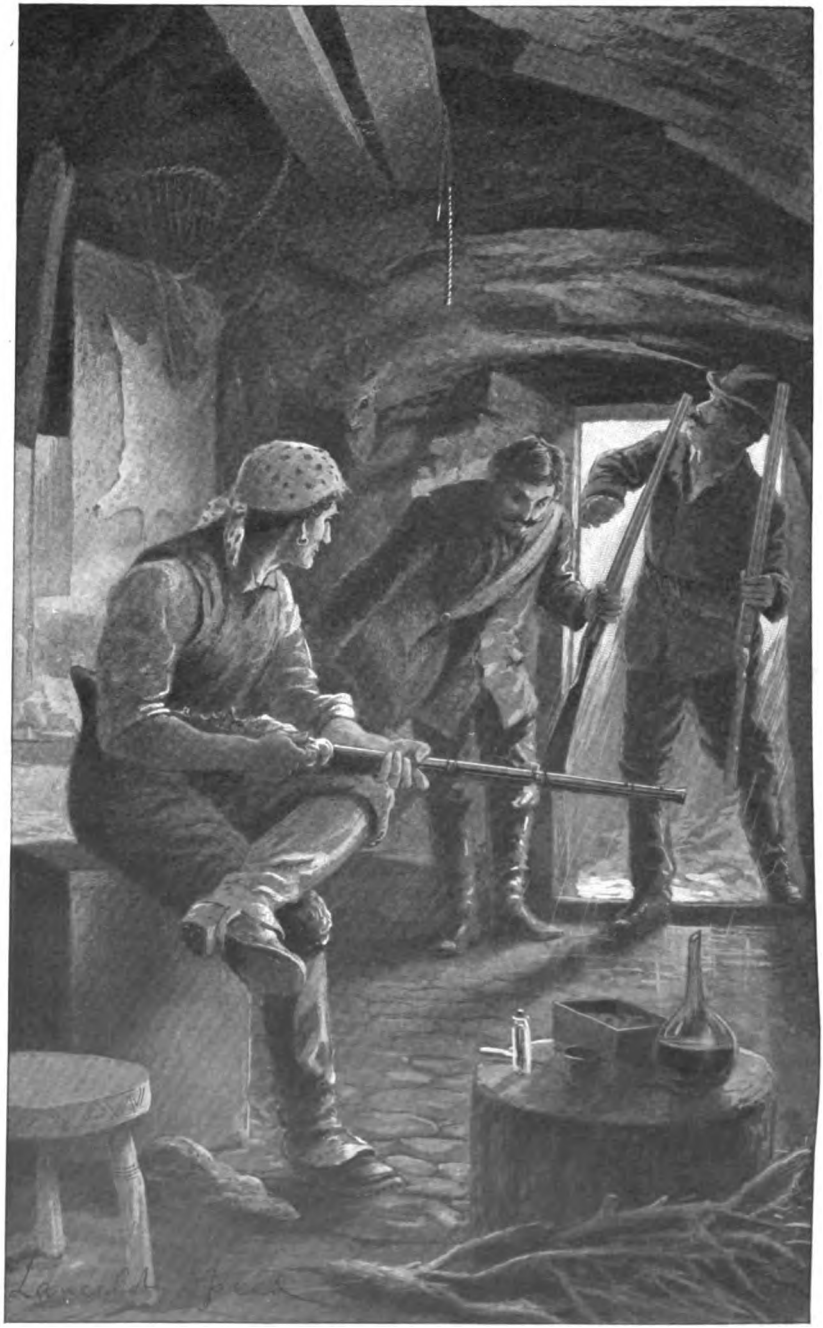
'We shall not be able to reach St. Romuald, the nearest refuge,'[1] Antonio said to me, for the first time in his life making some haste. 'And if Monsieur le Comte will trust me, although the place is not very Christian, we will knock at the door of Francesco Malatesta, the Corsican, the poacher of whom I have already spoken to Monsieur le Comte. He lives alone there on the top of the rock. Without doubt the fellow is the best huntsman in the canton; he always has some good pieces of venison hanging on a hook, for it is he who furnishes the market of Argeles twice a week with choice bits of game; and, by my faith, no matter what his secret may be, no matter if he has dealings with a purveyor still smarter than he, as they say, it is none of our business, is it? Let him give us something to ballast our stomachs and it will be a Christian deed.'

The reason was specious, but I did not need it, thanks to the fatigue of our march. I was so hungry that I was capable of accepting any proposition, and we soon arrived at the abode of the poacher, which was hidden by thick bushes and trees.

'Come in!' said a harsh voice, after we had knocked at the door. 'Come in, Master Perez . . . the birds are caught by the weather, and for the next hour there will not be much pleasure or comfort in the mountains.'

The man who spoke thus to us was about thirty years old, well built, with accentuated features, and dressed in the costume of a mountaineer. He was busy cleaning a Swiss carbine, and did not disturb himself on seeing Antonio, whom he had known for a long time, but when he perceived me, a stranger, he stopped

[1] In the Pyrenees and the Alps certain places of shelter erected from distance to distance for the benefit of tourists surprised by bad weather, are called 'refuges.'



'COME IN, MASTER PEREZ!'

his work, and rising, took my gun from me and placed a chair for me, extending cordial hospitality.

'This lodging is not very pretty,' he said, while showing me his abode, the smoky walls of which appeared to be cut in the rock, 'but, such as it is, I prefer it to any palace in the world. Look, sir! if you are a sportsman, look, and see what a splendid location!'

Speaking thus he approached the window, and began, with all the self-love of a satisfied owner, to enumerate the advantages of his retreat.

'From this hovel you have everything under your hand,' said he; 'there, behind that long chain of rocks, on a plateau about a quarter of a mile square, there pastures at this moment the most beautiful herd of *isards* to be found in all the Pyrenees from Couserans and the Bigorre to the confines of Basse-Navarre. Lower down, in the farthest part which is sheltered from the wind, and in the midst of aromatic plants, among which the *génipi*[1] and carline thistle are plentiful, is the favourite gathering spot, every morning at the same hour, for all the heath-cocks in the country. Even in this steep declivity can be found during the season the hazel-hen and the grouse. And all the time the hares are so numerous that it might be said in every rosemary bush you will find a couple of them.'

'Well,' I said in astonishment, 'I don't wonder that you were cleaning your gun so actively when you were interrupted by us. Pray continue. With such numerous neighbours the best barrel becomes foul, and no matter how good a marksman you may be, you must still use a certain number of cartridges each day.'

An almost imperceptible smile shone on the lips of the Corsican.

'Antonio,' said he, 'the old Jozion from Argeles, the owner of "The Black Bear," how many *isards* did he have suspended outside his door last month?'

'At least twelve,' answered the guide.

'How many heath-cocks?'

'Twice as many, if I remember rightly.'

'I sold him all of them,' continued the poacher with a triumphant air. 'Besides that, I furnished to the best houses in the city about a hundred head of small game. Now, messieurs, if you wish to know how much the profession costs me, or how much it brings—I keep an exact account of all. Here is the

[1] A variety of artemesia growing in the Alps and Pyrenees.

cash received for the last month,' he added, pulling from a chest a money-bag which seemed very well filled, 'and here is the other side—the expense.'

Saying these words he showed me a small *isard's* horn, certainly too narrow to contain more than half an ounce of powder. I looked at Antonio; his face did not express the smallest degree of incredulity, and it was easy to see by his darkening look that Malatesta Francesco's assertion inspired him with more fright than doubt. If the coward had dared, I believe he would have held his nose, so strongly did our host, to his mind, smell of sulphur.

'Be careful, friend,' I said to the poacher, 'you are talking to a man who has common sense, and, in addition to that, is an experienced sportsman. I flatter myself that we no longer live in the times when, by invoking Satan at midnight in some solitary dark cross road in the forest, one was enabled to see the Prince of Darkness holding in one hand the enchanted bullets and in the other the ready written contract. I do not believe these things, so don't think me a simpleton, but explain to me, please, how it is that, using as little powder as you do, you bring down so many victims.'

'That is my business,' answered the poacher, smiling, 'and I cannot give my prescription to anybody.'

'Have you the gift of following the birds in the air, or forcing a hare to stop by simply calling to her?'

'Perhaps,' answered Francesco, looking deliberately at my companion with malicious intent. 'When the Jews were hungry in the desert they did not take any trouble, I think, to know how the manna came to them. Here is some bread, and here some drink. Antonio must be going to shelter his two dogs which he left outside in the storm. You know the dog-kennel, my master? It is the second small door around the corner—not the first, remember, because there are shut Achmet and Raoul, my dogs; and, I tell you, they don't like strangers. During that time, if monsieur would care to help me, he can have his choice between skinning a young wild boar which I have here, or plucking a wild duck.'

'A boar! Wild ducks!' exclaimed Perez in comical surprise. 'Oh, but that's impossible! There are no boars except in the forest of Alava, six leagues from here, and the only brood of wild ducks known in the country this year is on Green Pond, in the park of the Marquis de Moncade.'

Instead of answering, Francesco lifted a trap-door placed

in a corner of the room, which led to a small cellar, and pulling out one by one the three head of game, threw them disdainfully upon the table. On seeing this, Antonio came back.

'You are a very skilful hunter,' he said ironically to our host, and while speaking he carefully examined the birds and beast, 'and the profession, which is not very paying to others, brings you in great profit. But, upon the soul of my mother, I prefer it to be you and not I to have such rare talents.'

'Truly?' interrupted the Corsican.

'Truly,' continued Antonio, 'I say it here frankly, as I think it. Honest comfort is a good thing, and one is always better off in this world with a full pocket! Every time one goes to town one meets friends everywhere. Sometimes one drinks a bottle of old wine with André Cyulgi, the muleteer; another time a good rost, to which Vincent, the smuggler, invites you; but—will you believe me, Francesco, I am not ambitious to have such advantages. For me, although I haven't a *maravedis* in my pocket, I would rather remain poor all my life and beg for my bread than become rich in your way. I should be afraid that the money I earned would one day burn my fingers. Look, monsieur, you who are a connoisseur,' speaking to me, 'I take you for a judge; look, please, at this young boar and these two fowls, and if one of them was, I don't say is, killed with a rifle, but merely taken with a snare, may I at once lose my place and my name of huntsman!'

At first I could not help smiling, so great was the loss which threatened my friend, the Baron de Pierpont, by this exclamation, but I obeyed the invitation extended to me, and in my turn examined the game.

Not a grain of lead had touched the young boar, and his hair was not soiled by a drop of blood. Not a feather was missing from the two young ducks, and there was no trace of a shot in their bodies! I noticed a peculiarity, and one which surprised me very much, however, especially as it was common to all three animals. This was that each one's eyes looked as though they had been scooped out by a skilful and dexterous surgeon, presenting only a hideous cavity through which could be seen the brain, the skull being broken.

'This is the state in which every piece of game enters here,' Antonio hastened to tell me, while I questioned the poacher with a look, asking for an explanation of the wonder. 'Izard, hare, hazel-hen, heath-cock — every piece of game brought by Francesco to market in Argeles is deprived of both

eyes. So I ask you frankly, must one not be blind, like those poor beasts, not to see and recognise the infallible marks made, not by the hand of man, but by Satan's claw!'

The attack was a lively one, and I congratulated myself inwardly on seeing my indiscreet companion so near the door, for I should have disliked a more serious dispute, but a burst of laughter from our host proved that this insult was to him only a pleasantry.

'Poor man,' said he disdainfully, with a shrug of his shoulders, following with his eyes the retreating figure of Antonio, who took the dogs to shelter. Then, turning to me, 'You are a good-hearted man, monsieur,' he added, 'and you are not superstitious like that great booby, Perez, if I judge well from your speech. Stay then with me to-night. Without any ceremony I offer you supper and a bed. The storm increases, and you cannot think of departure. To-morrow morning, before the first light of day, we will rise quietly, leave this blockhead to his leaden sleep, and pay a visit to a daring companion who for four years has helped me in the chase.'

'A friend? A comrade?' I asked with curiosity.

'A poacher more dexterous than all the poachers of France and Spain together,' answered Francesco without any hesitation. 'But our expedition can be undertaken only under two conditions. The first is, that when we arrive there, no matter what happens, you will remain to my accomplice a silent and invisible spectator; the second, when we return you must forget all you have seen, or at least must be discreet and not reveal the secret to any one. Do you accept this obligation?'

'I accept everything,' I answered immediately, 'and I promise you to observe faithfully everything you wish me to do.'

'I am glad,' said he; 'you speak like a man; I don't doubt you any longer. I am by reputation only Francesco Malatesta, the poacher, a person in the good graces of no one, as you see, and whose name is not pronounced without a certain fright among those timid children of the plain. Well, to-morrow, before sunrise, if you have the legs as well as the heart, I will guide you myself to the summit of those mountains by a pathway not often trampled by profane feet. There will appear before you another poacher more redoubtable than I—a true King of the mountain! and there, in your presence, will be accomplished strange things which will explain to you the secret of my mysterious and terrible renown.'

The return of Antonio, who entered at that moment, pre-

vented him from telling me more. I hastened to inform my guide of the amiable invitation of our host to remain over night, and as the tempest had now burst in all its fury, Master Perez, good Christian though he was, seemed this time to pay less heed to his scruples. The sensation of comfort a man feels when he is sheltered from peril, the appetising look of the improvised repast, and finally the hunger which would be pleased with even a more modest supper, all disposed him to be indulgent.

It was already dark when we left the table. Francesco, in whose eyes I read a signal, took advantage of the vacillating state of the huntsman, who had put his mouth a little too often to a certain leather flask containing Spanish wine, and conducted him to a small bedroom, where the dolt, only too glad to find a bed of fern, soon began to snore louder than he ever struck up to the flourish of the hunt. Then, coming immediately back to me, my host said with cordial earnestness :

'Here is my usual bedroom,' hanging up a kind of hammock lined with several wolf-skins sewed together. 'It is not a good exchange for a comfortable bed, perhaps, but I hope that, wrapped in the fur of this gentleman, whom I killed last winter' (saying this he pulled from a closet a huge bear's skin), 'you will be able to rest for two or three hours. You will need some sleep. As for me, I did not hunt to-day, so, if you will permit me, I will watch you while you sleep, sitting here, like a good *bourgeois* at his fireside. I must also prepare supper for your dogs, whom that stupid Perez left to fast while he sleeps himself sober, and as our expedition makes it necessary to rise before dawn, I will take care to wake you in time.'

I was hardly in the hammock of my host when, under the influence of the sweet warmth, in spite of the last squalls of the wind moaning under the door, I fell asleep, with hundreds of fantastical and whimsical dreams passing through my brain, all more or less referring to the different events of the past day. Sometimes I saw a troop of *isards* in the midst of a glacier, slipped from rock to rock, and had almost reached them when a bottomless precipice opened between me and them. Sometimes, unarmed, I followed a narrow, winding pathway, bordered on one side by a steep wall and on the other by an immense precipice. Then came unexpectedly a great bear, who walked along the same route, only from the other end. But, behold ! a most unexpected occurrence—and what good breeding for a bear !—the animal, on approaching me, instead of

contesting the passage, lay flat and invited me to pass over his back, so that, thanks to his complacency, I escaped the dreadful fall.

'Why are you jumping about that way,' said my host, shaking me at the moment when I was beginning another dream —'pardon the comparison—like a real sea-hog struggling in a fisherman's net? It's three o'clock already, and if we wish to keep our appointment we have only about enough time. . . .'

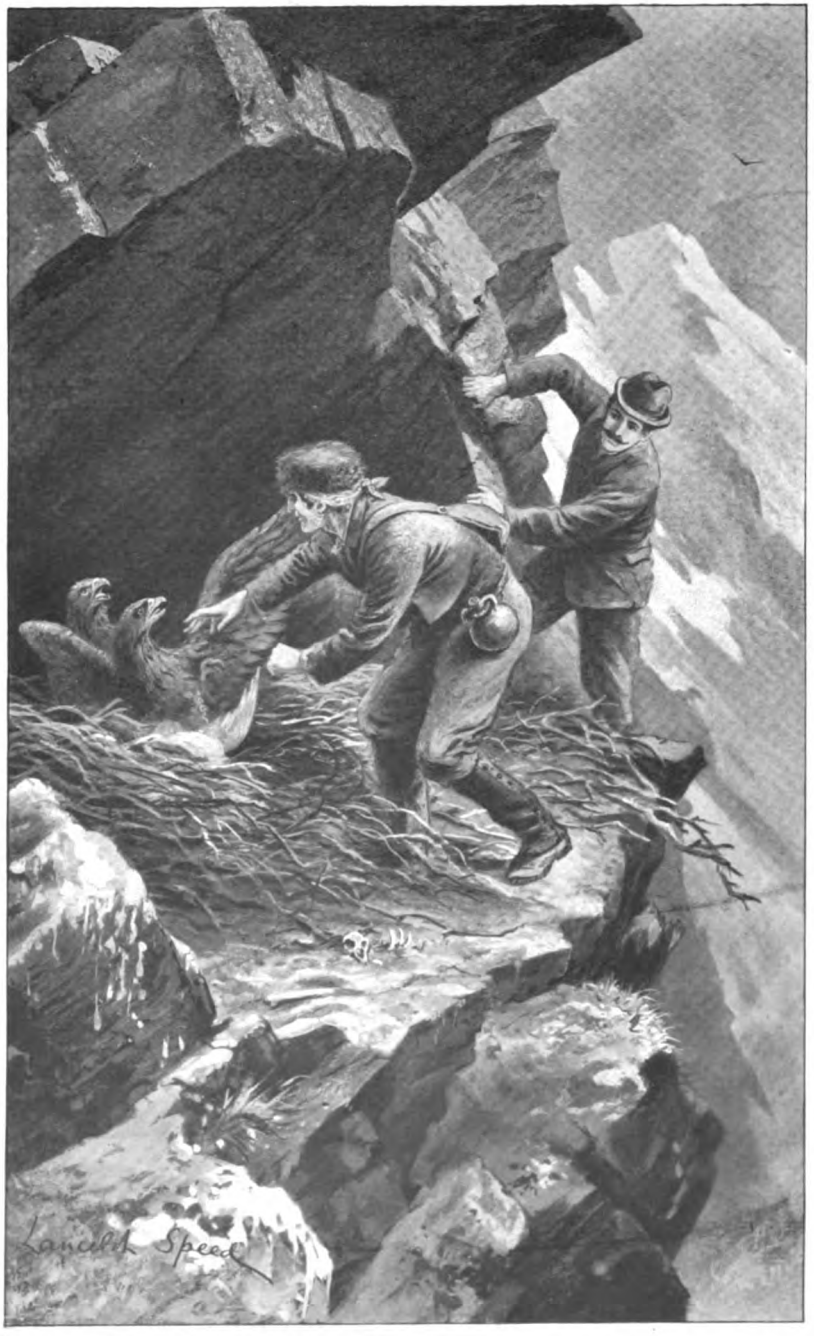
I arose, hastily gathering together my confused ideas. We drank a small glass of old rum, which I took care to supply myself with before going to the hunt; then, softly closing the door, in order not to wake Perez, we went out.

The weather was glorious, as it almost always is after a storm, and by the light of the moon, which shone in all its splendour, I at first followed my guide quite easily. But soon the road became more difficult. There was a long ridge of half-bare rocks, rising in a sort of spiral, and when I saw these I must frankly say that I asked myself several times with secret uneasiness whether it was not a piece of temerity on my part to attempt such a trip under the guidance of an unknown man.

In about an hour, however, we stopped, having finished our perilous ascent, and while Francesco freed himself of carbine and game-bag I looked at the scenery, which seemed to me very well chosen for the theatre of dramatic action. Around us extended a plateau of perhaps fifteen or twenty square feet, crowning the summit of the mountain. There was still some vegetation to be found, judging from the fine herb which carpeted the ground, and in one corner, between the fissures in a rock, rose a curious shrub which I recognised as an old larch-tree crushed by a thunder-bolt.

In the meantime the day began to break and we could distinguish objects all around us appearing from out the fantastic vagueness of the night, and assuming more decided and precise forms. It was evident that we were upon one of the highest peaks of the Pyrenees, for we dominated to a great extent the whole chain of mountains extending from the Mediterranean to the Bay of Biscay, and under our eyes stretched as in an amphitheatre an immense panorama which beggared description.

'Remember our agreement!' said my guide to me in a mysterious manner, returning after an absence of a few moments. 'Hide with me behind this thicket, and from there observe everything in silence. The one whom we expect will come soon!'



'WELL, WELL, MY LITTLE FRIENDS, LET US BE GOOD CHILDREN!'

I opened my eyes wide as *portes cochères*, but for a long time I waited in vain, comforting my mystified self by witnessing a glorious sunrise, when all at once the Corsican said to me in a low voice :

'Here it is!' and at the same time he pointed to a small black point almost lost in the immensity of the heavens.

The object was still vague and indistinguishable, a something hovering in the air, an almost imperceptible point like that which, in 'Robin Hood,' Richard shows to Tony to make him realise the miraculous reach of his shot.

But little by little the form became larger, developed itself, took on a shape, and before I had much time for reflection there appeared to me an eagle of enormous size swooping directly down on us, cutting the air as a skilful oarsman cuts the wave, without precipitation, without effort, with scarcely a movement of the wings.

He held in his claws a bird about the size of a chicken, which I soon recognised as being a duck; and passing just above our heads, almost near enough to touch us in its flight, the eagle sank down in the midst of an enormous eyrie, situated a few feet from our bush, which I had not yet noticed, as it was concealed by a rock under the spreading roots of a big oak-tree.

'Well now, do you understand?' Francesco asked me in a half-voice, unable to keep silence longer when he saw my surprise; 'one more *halbrun* less on the Green Pond of the Marquis de Moncade! You see now whether they are right in calumniating me and saying, as did that idiot Antonio, that I have neither faith nor religion and have made a secret pact with the devil! Stupid people!'

'There is all my secret,' he added, 'and a few words will be sufficient now to make everything perfectly clear. I don't know whether or not you are acquainted with the habits of eagles, but I have observed more than twenty times that this bird, like the stork, builds its nest every year in the same place. This eagle is a female of the largest kind, who for four years has nested in this vicinity. Every year, when the little ones peeped out of the shell, I kill the male, sure that there will be another the next season, and taking advantage of the mother's absence I fasten the two eaglets firmly in the nest by means of iron rings to which a chain is affixed. Thanks to that stratagem, their education, which is generally limited to thirty days, is extended for some months, and as their needs

increase in proportion to the development of their forces, the more they grow the stronger they are, the more nourishment they need, and the more numerous are the excursions made by their purveyor—or, rather, mine—who hunts with zeal. Morning and evening I am here at my post, one hour before sunset and one hour before sunrise. I take care to fetch in my bag a few pounds of fresh meat, either a piece of mule or some other bait of that kind. I throw it to the hungry eaglets before the eagle has appeared, and as they are fed before she arrives, her claw laden with the precious booty, it is I who, after she has departed, take all the game, which is more embarrassing than useful to the brood.'

He had not finished when we heard the heavy beating of wings. It was the royal bird slowly starting to fly. Hardly had she disappeared behind us, shooting majestically forth into space, in quest of new prey, when we ran together, Francesco and I, to the eyrie which she had just left.

True, there were the two eaglets chained, who rose on seeing us, snapping their beaks with wild pride. Beside them lay the duck intact. I did not care to carry it off, but the mountaineer made no hesitation about taking it, being accustomed to their habits.

'Well, well, my little friends, let us be good children!' he said, stretching forth one hand as though to caress them, while rapidly taking up the duck with the other. 'One more month of captivity and you are free!'

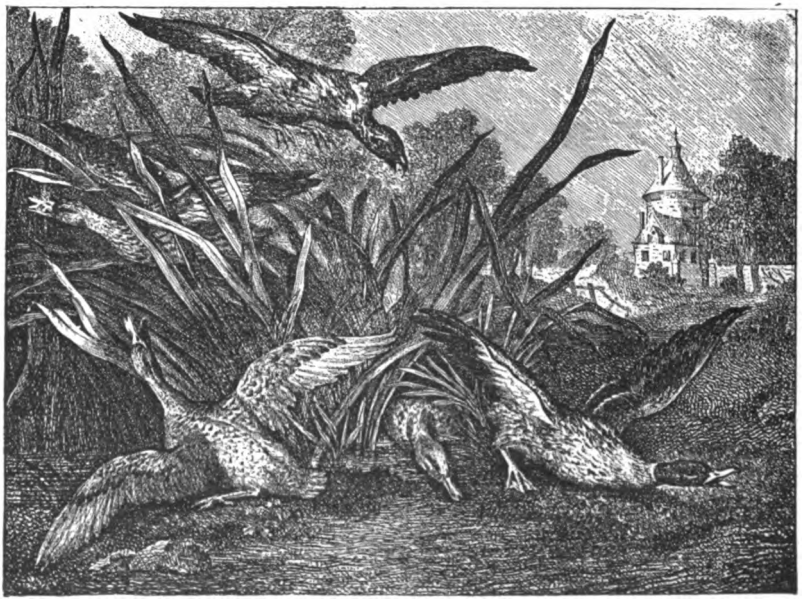
It was a *halbrun, ma foi!* a young duck exactly like the two we had for supper the evening before. This was neither more nor less injured by the eagle than the others. It was attacked at the eyes—a wound very easy to explain, however, if I had remembered that all birds of prey, from the largest to the smallest, always first blind their victims.

We went down the mountain by the same road which we ascended in the early morning.

At the door of Francesco's hut sat Master Antonio Perez, caressing his lime-hound with apparent indifference, but inwardly very uneasy on account of our long absence. On seeing us—and especially on seeing the accusing third duck which I showed him in triumph, his comical fright was again aroused, and he was about to speak, when I stopped him abruptly:

'You must know, my poor Antonio,' I said, while shaking hands in farewell with our host, 'that you are only an old

visionary, less qualified to hold a gun than a distaff among the old gossiping women of your town. I don't know whether or not you ever put your foot inside of an arena to fight the bull, but I do know that you are the biggest coward I ever met, and if I could have a wish for you, it would be that you might sometime become as good a huntsman as Francesco Malatesta, here present, is a good Christian!'



THROWING THE CRICKET-BALL

BY W. J. FORD

I WAS sitting in the pavilion at Lord's last year watching a match, in the course of which Albert Trott chased a ball to the lower boundary and flung it to the bowler. So hard and low was the throw that as the ball hummed off the hard ground the bowler considered it prudent not to meddle with it, whereupon it promptly found the boundary at the Grand Stand side, hitting the seats with a vicious thump. Turning to a friend next to me, I ventured the remark that none of our English cricketers could throw like that, and got for my pains the cynical retort, 'Oh yes they can, and they do, but they call it bowling.' Knowing that he had fads about modern bowling, and remembering the wily undergraduate who declined to give a courteous examiner the alternative name by which St. Paul was known, 'because he wasn't such a fool as to lead up to the Kings of Israel and Judah,' I held my peace; for that particular controversy is a subject upon which, like the Sceptic Philosophers, I prefer at present to 'suspend my judgment.' However my indictment against modern throwing powers as displayed by the average fieldsman still holds good I believe; and without posing as a praiser of the past I cannot help thinking that the general average is much lower than it used to be, in the days when boundaries were rare and a man was selected for a side because, *inter alia*, he could throw.

That the bowler should be anxious to save his arm as much

as possible is only a necessary precaution, but it is humiliating to see outfielders either jerk up the ball, or trundle it along the ground, or heave it upwards with a sort of putting-the-weight action, dull, lifeless, and inert, without fire or fizz. Yet the Australians could throw to a man, hard, businesslike throws, that meant the far boundary if the bowler or wicket-keeper failed and no one was backing up. It is quite conceivable that their warmer climate lends elasticity to the muscles and laxity to the joints, enabling them to throw the arm well away from them (as a professional tried to teach me to do at golf, though the poor man soon gave it up), and personally I incline to the climatic theory, for, having been able at one time to throw 100 yards myself with difficulty, I tried to do the same thing very early in one cricket season, and 'throwing my arm out' settled the question for evermore: if a prize were offered for the shortest throw, I should come very close to winning it.

Another theory of my own is that many gymnastic exercises which test the arms are very bad for throwing, promoting muscle at the expense of flexibility, till the patient becomes muscle-tied, and the weight-putting heave takes the place of proper throwing. Being perfectly willing to refute my own argument, I will quote against myself a great weight-putter who could also throw, S. S. Brown of Oxford, who won that event four times at the 'Varsity sports in the early seventies, and threw the cricket-ball 122 yards 'and a bittock' at Oxford. Yet he didn't win the latter event, for a certain W. H. Game was in evidence, of whom more hereafter. I never saw Brown throw, but as a weight-putter he had the 'corkiest' action of any I ever watched, and I can also vouch for his muscularity, for we once made our way together through the Boat-race crowd on Hammersmith Bridge in the days when the early-closing movement was not, and his muscle *plus* my weight soon opened up a lane.

As to the record throw there is some difficulty. Bonnor, the Australian, is said to have thrown over 140 yards, and has certainly thrown 130; and a certain 'Billy the Aboriginal' is credited with 140 yards, a throw which is fairly well authenticated. Bonnor could certainly hurl very hard, and very far as well, the two things not being exactly the same, the former requiring a high muzzle velocity, while the latter necessitates the knack, which our siege howitzers possess, of lobbing the ball high. Bonnor's throw for a bet is famous. He took odds to £100, if this detail is accurate, that on the day he landed from Australia he would with his first throw, and without preliminary

practice, send the ball 115 yards to the pitch. Accordingly, on the parade-ground at Plymouth, he made his effort and won his bet with 4 yards to spare, a nice little bit of pocket-money, well earned too, considering that he had had no practice and must have been more or less stale after his voyage.

The longest authenticated throw is that of one Brown, who, in 1819, sent the ball on Walderton Common to a distance of 137 yards; but then it was only a $4\frac{1}{2}$-ounce ball, which makes all the difference. W. F. Forbes threw over 132 yards when he was an Eton schoolboy, and one Fawcett is credited with an almost similar record (made, I believe, at Brighton), but I know not with what truth; the ever-trusty 'Whitaker,' however, credits W. H. Game with the record, made when he defeated S. S. Brown's poor little throw of 122 yards with a great heave of 127 yards 1 foot 3 inches. Game was not merely the longest thrower, but the best thrower I ever saw, for he hurled so hard that the first hop of the ball seemed to be almost as long as its first flight from arm to ground, and it came skimming along at a nice handy height, and as true as an arrow. Was there ever any one else who could afford to play with the ball at long-leg so as to induce the batsman to try a second run, and could then run his partner out at the bowler's end? I think not, but I have seen Game do it, Lord's being the *venue* and a Clifton boy the victim. It was said, but I cannot vouch for this story or the next, that the first time he played for Surrey he threw so hard that Pooley grumblingly expostulated, on the ground that he had to consider his hands and that the batsman had got home: a little later, however, the pair of them worked the oracle, and Pooley, his serenity restored, remarked to the captain, 'That's the way I like to see a young gentleman throw in, sir.' The other story goes that Game, being in the dressing-room, overheard some one say in the dining-room that his throwing was quite overrated, and that the speaker didn't believe that he could throw from the pavilion to the wicket, on which W. H. G. sauntered out to the wicket and, without taking off his blazer, threw the ball clean *over* the pavilion! On what ground this occurred, or is supposed to have occurred, my memory is a blank.

Crossland of Lancashire was reputed to be a very fine thrower—this is not written 'sarcastic' about his bowling—and his admirers used to say, or are said to have been used to say, that he could stand in a barrel and throw 100 yards, though I never met any one who saw him do so: but the following story about

him is not bad. In a local match he rashly went on to bowl at the end where the rival umpire was stationed: I say 'rival' advisedly, because there *is* a class of matches in which the umpires are good and trusty partisans. However, this umpire promptly no-balled Crossland for throwing, and that not once, till the *soi-disant* bowler got cross. At the end of an over he bowled a ball down at the side of the wicket, and, calling the umpire's attention to it, said, 'Thot be bowling! And this be throwing,' he added, with which he flung the ball yards out of the ground and stumped off to the tent in a huff. The story concludes with the statement that the ball could not be found, that a new one was not forthcoming, and that the game was abandoned in consequence.

I lighted on an account of a good straight shot the other day in 'Scores and Biographies'; it occurred in a single-wicket match, one on each side. The batsman struck, the bowler dashed after the ball, and threw the batsman out full pitch, the ball never touching the ground, from a measured distance of 87 yards: and as a *pendant* to this I quote the feat of Albert Trott, who threw so hard and true that he ran his man out from mid-off and smashed a stump fairly in the middle, carrying off the fragments as a trophy.

I should like to know how far a stone, a smooth stone from the brook, can be thrown? I knew a man in New Zealand who would back himself to throw 180 yards once in three shots, and who won money at it. I forget what his record was, but something well over 200 yards. We also had a good stone-thrower at Repton, and I well remember how, when I was a small boy, I saw him have a shot at the church clock and hit it. We all vowed that he hit one of the hands, and that we saw it quiver, but that may have been imagination. However, being at Repton the other day, it occurred to me to step the distance of the tower, which proved to be 110 paces, good, well-stepped paces; so, as the clock was well up in the air, the throw must have been at least 140 or 150 yards, and a rare straight one into the bargain. I wonder if any of my readers have ever fallen a victim to the trap on the Marlborough College ground, which is perched on a terrace, with a drop of about ten feet, measured vertically? Once over this the fields-man disappears from sight, but to help his throw another fieldsman goes to the bottom of the bank and another posts himself on the top, in a dead line between No. 1 and the wicket; hence No. 1, if he can hurl hard, throws right over

No. 3's head, and occasionally the batsman finds the ball hurtling in from an unseen arm, to his utter discomfiture. If the distance is too great for No. 1, he simply throws to one of his brother-fieldsmen, who duly passes the ball on. It was a Marlborough boy, too, who once played me a clever trick, by pretending from third man to throw to the bowler's wicket. I at once slowed down and told my partner 'Your end,' whereupon third man threw to my end, under his left arm, hit the wicket, and sent me back, a prey to melancholy. It was very neat and very 'slim.' Going back to my original tirade about the degeneracy of modern throwers, I must disclaim any intention of including a certain officer of the R.A., a sinewy gunner, who probably knows all about trajectories and things of that sort. We were playing low down at Lord's, and the said gunner was on the edge of the upper boundary with the ball in his hand. I certainly took that last run rather easily, too easily for a man who carries weight, but he would have been a very fleet man who beat the pace of that throw, which came down the hill like a streak of light, skimming to the top of the bails and running me out by 3 yards. Likewise was I regaled some time ago with what seemed to be a 'yarn,' and nothing more, about a hard-slinging long-stop who threw down both the wickets with one throw, both the batsmen being off their ground; but I may have done the narrator an injustice, for I stumbled across a stray note in 'Scores and Biographies' the other day which records that long-off threw down both the wickets at one shot, the ball passing *through* the stumps in both cases. This occurred in 1853, and Caffyn was the thrower; he got no reward, as neither batsmen was out, but, considering the angle, the incident was as curious as the throw was hard.

It has always seemed to me that at long ranges an attempt to throw the full distance is a mistake, as both accuracy and length—using the latter word as we use it of bowling—suffer unless the thrower is of a really high class; two short throws, the first to an intermediate man who is helping up, always appear to me the better investment, as requiring no wind-up or flourish; but, alas! many a moderate thrower, out of sheer pride I believe, loves to heave over the intermediate's head, so as to get in his throw at all hazards. It is worth while reminding men, too, that though 'heels together' is a very good position for stopping a hit, it is a very bad one for returning the ball. If the hand and eye can be trusted—and no man is a good field unless

he can trust both—he wants his left shoulder well forward ; then stopping the ball in a line with his right knee, or just behind it, he is in the correct position for the fast, underhand 'chuck' that needs neither run nor flourish, in other words, no waste of time. Gunn is an artist at this style, and can chuck both hard and straight, even when he is off his balance and his hand actually on the ground ; but then Gunn in his best days was a perfect fieldsman. He is not very bad now.

Since writing the above I find that I have made a slight error as to record throws, and that Bonnor is only *said* to have beaten 130 yards. I have heard with my ears that 140 was his distance, but that it was not authenticated ; further, 'Billy the Aboriginal' made his big throw at Clement in Australia, and, according to some versions, got as far as 142½ yards. Perhaps some kind reader could set the question right for ever ?

A PRIZE COMPETITION

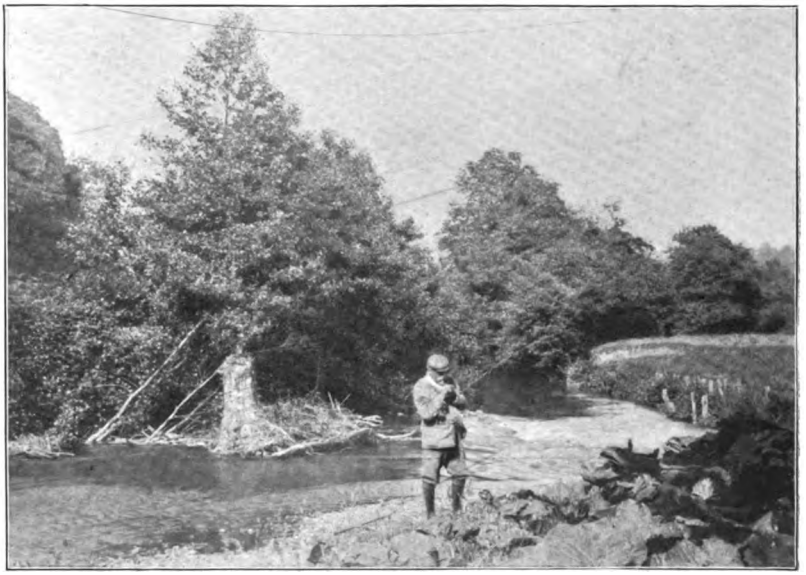
THE Proprietors of the *Badminton Magazine* offer a prize of Ten Guineas each month for the best original photograph sent in representing any sporting subject. Ten other prizes will also be given away each month, each of them consisting of an original drawing by one or other of the artists who illustrate the Magazine. Good clear pictures are of course necessary, and when possible the negative should be sent as well as the print. Competitors may also send any photographs they have by them on two conditions: that they have been taken by the sender, and that they have never been previously published. A few lines explaining when and where the photographs were taken should accompany each negative. Residents in the country who have access to shooting parties, or who chance to be in the neighbourhood when hounds are running, will doubtless find interesting subjects, and these will also be provided at football or cricket matches, wherever golf, cycling, fishing, skating, polo, athletics are practised. Racing and steeplechasing, including Hunt Meetings and Point-to-point contests, should also supply excellent material. All matters of public school interest will be welcome.

THE MARCH COMPETITION

The prize for the March Competition has been awarded to Mr. Herbert Bickerton for the photograph which is given on the opposite page. Prizes have been sent to the takers of the photographs which follow, and to certain others for whose work space could not be found.

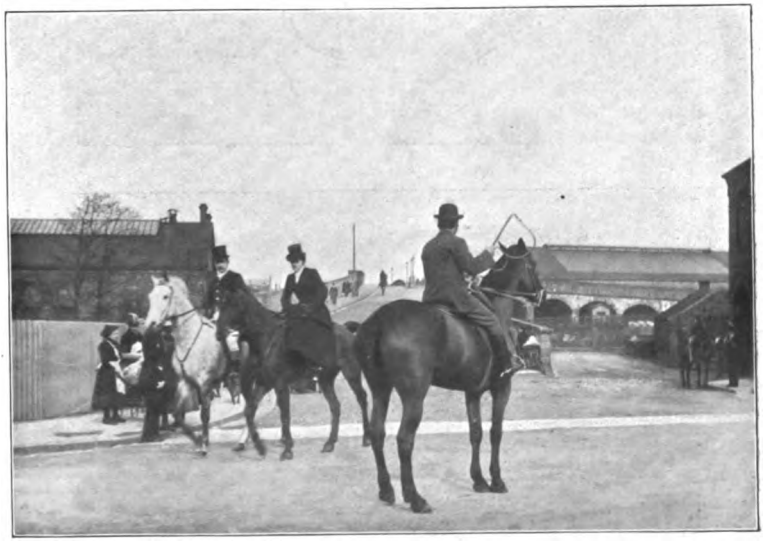
'NOW WHERE ON EARTH IS THAT BAIT?'

Photograph taken by Mr. Herbert Bickerton



FISHING ON THE RIVER ALYN

Photograph taken by Mr. W. A. Taylor



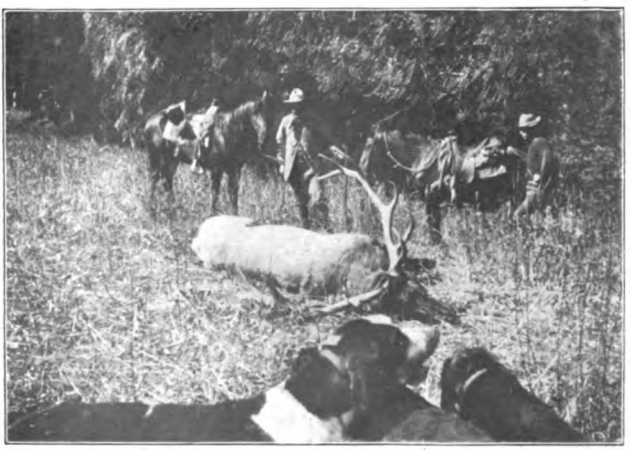
MEET OF HOLDERNESS HOUNDS AT BRIDLINGTON STATION

THE DEPUTY MASTER—MR. STANLEY WILSON—AND HIS SISTER MISS MURIEL WILSON

Photograph taken by Mr. E. L. Davis

SCENES IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Photographs taken by H. Seton-Karr, Esq., M.P.



SCENES IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Photographs taken by H. Seton-Karr, Esq., M.P.

CURLING — SENDING THE STONE ON ITS WAY

Photograph taken by Mrs. Delves Broughton

TIGRESS

Shot and Photograph taken by Mr. R. Goodfellow, Lieutenant 4th Lancer

MID-KENT STAGHOUNDS—MASTER, MR. A. LENEY
MEET AT ULCOMBE
Photograph taken by Mr. L. Castleman Brown

THE OXFORD CREW PRACTISING AT HENLEY
Photograph taken by Mr. C. O. Lowsley

A BRACE OF GOOD PIKE
Photograph taken by Mr. G. Christopher Davies

PIKE FISHING ON THE BROADS
Photograph taken by Mr. G. Christopher Davies

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

WE get copious accounts from South Africa of what is going on in various places, but there always seems to me a special interest about letters which are not written with a view to publication. I received one the other day from a friend, a well-known gentleman rider, and he gives such a graphic account of his position and surroundings that I am tempted to quote him. Dating March 5 he writes: 'As you are probably at this moment having an excellent lunch consisting of everything not in season, my spirit has asked permission to sit beside you for a while, being bored with the lunch I have provided for myself, made up of some tinned mutton and very hard biscuit. I am writing on the top of a kopje near Paardeburg, protecting our flank by a piquet. In front I have a sort of enlarged Newmarket Heath, with a flat space of ten miles stretching before me; I have just been watching a small Boer convoy passing some four miles off in the distance. It is a lovely day, sitting among the rocks is not an unpleasant duty, and at six o'clock to-night I shall be relieved. It occurs to me that last Friday and Saturday we soldiers should have been careering over the fences at Sandown. Instead of that we were receiving the attentions of the Boers. We went out to reconnoitre the kopjes and found they were holding them strongly, with two guns and a Pom Pom. They fairly pumped lead at us, but only succeeded in slightly wounding three men. I expect we shall move in a day or two on towards Bloemfontein. It was splendid getting hold of Cronje with 4000 of his merry boys. The trenches in their laager were a sight to see, very deep and burrowed back, so that artillery fire was harmless; they produced 162 wounded, but no signs of any dead. What they had done with them Heaven knows, I suppose thrown them into the river as usual. Reggie Ward and many of the boys are here, but I fancy most of them will not be sorry when they find them-

selves back in England, looking for winners instead of Boers, for it becomes rather monotonous fighting an enemy who never shows himself, and never gives you a jolly in the open; we always have to do the attacking.'

'I hear there was great excitement in England over the relief of Kimberley. The Boers simply would not believe we were coming until we actually appeared, which we did when the Kimberley people had had just about enough of it, especially as in the last ten days of the siege the Boers had been playing upon them with a big gun firing a 100-lb. shell. The day following the relief we had a fight in which my regiment rather suffered,' [the regiment, I should remark, is the Scots Greys,] 'as Rathdonell's only boy was shot, Walter Long's son and another boy severely wounded. I had my horse shot by a brute who suddenly bobbed up from behind a stone thirty yards off and started to plug at me. He put in five shots, but only succeeded in slaying my mount. So far I have been lucky and I yet hope to ride some more winners. I see Alwynne Compton has got up a glorious contingent of yeomen, and I expect we shall want them all, as the lines of communication will be so long. I must say this is a perfect climate to fight in, although the last three months have been fearfully hot; now we have come in for a spell of rain, and the days are far more like early autumn ones, which of course they are in this country. I have been extraordinarily well, and if I could only catch a Boer in the open should feel quite happy; but I hope we shall be back in time for Goodwood, and I look forward to the day when we shall go down once more to Newmarket; it is something to have pleasant memories to feed on here. This is a delightful afternoon, the long stretch of heath in front needs only to be transformed a little and you could imagine a First July Meeting taking place. A few Boer shots, goodness knows what at, and a cackling blackcock are the only sounds to be heard.' I shall be so delighted to see my friend back that I will gladly face his wrath for having published his letter, especially as I have no doubt my readers will find it entertaining.

Jump racing is about over for the season, and before it starts again time is afforded to see whether something cannot be done to improve the sport. I have heard gentlemen who

own and ride horses declare that they have never seen such scandalous things as have taken place during the past season, and unless something is done to check these scandals it is to be feared that the better class of those who race under National Hunt Rules will abandon the game. A primary essential is the election to the National Hunt Committee of a few men who really understand steeplechasing in the first place, and who regularly attend steeplechasing meetings in the second. I think it would be safe to say that half the members of the present Committee never by any sort of chance go near a meeting, and that half the remainder go very seldom, so that the very few energetic members receive blame for the general laxness of the body to which they belong. It is a wonderful thing that as a rule the only people who do not seem to know what is being done when something outrageous is in course of perpetration should be the stewards, and there can be no doubt that the rogues receive great encouragement from the manner in which they are allowed to carry on their robberies.

Of course, a vast deal of nonsense is constantly talked about horses being 'stopped.' There are some foolish people who believe that about seventy-five per cent. of the races that are run are 'arranged,' and few things are more irritating than to hear these idiots give vent to their preposterous suspicions. They, too, really aid rascality in a way, for they tempt one to argue on the opposite side and maintain that such a thing as a horse not trying is practically unknown. As a matter of fact, however, during the past season it has been notorious on many occasions that horses have not been 'out.' If Mr. R. H. Fry and some of his brethren of the ring were persuaded to be quite frank and could tell the N. H. Committee what they know, I am confident that some of the members would be very much surprised indeed. It is unfortunate that deception should be so easy in jump racing. A bad mistake not seldom effectually destroys a horse's chance, and if a jockey asserts that such a mistake has knocked him out it is extremely difficult to dispute his assertions; but when at the fall of the flag long odds are derisively offered against a horse, when he makes no show, when in similar or worse company he becomes a hot favourite and wins next time he is out, experienced people perfectly well understand what it means.

It would be unjust to those few of the National Hunt Committee who do attend to their business not to make cordial acknowledgment of the careful and conscientious pains they take to do their duty. Suspicions were lately entertained with regard to a horse called Cracky—when the mob wait for a horse returning to scale and vehemently hoot its rider it is safe to assume that something *is* suspected—and the National Hunt stewards would no doubt have been warmly applauded if they had warned off owner and jockey. It is greatly to their credit in this case that they were entirely uninfluenced by any thought of a popular decision. The charge was not clearly proved, and they gave the accused the benefit of the doubt; though, at the same time, to 'caution severely' men who are suspected is unsatisfactory and rather meaningless; for either they are innocent, in which case there is nothing to caution them about, or they are guilty and penalties ought to be rigidly enforced, particularly at a time when warnings are so badly needed. Steeplechasing is entirely in the hands of the National Hunt Committee. If they care to do what is necessary, there are at any rate some members who know perfectly well what should be done and how to set about it. Strict and competent supervision is the chief requisite. If the Committee as a whole are content to let things slide, the sport, which has fallen on evil days, will assuredly fall upon worse.

The Prince of Wales certainly has wonderfully good luck in racing. Just as St. Frusquin was cleared out of the way of Persimmon, Romanoff disappeared from the Grand National, and Hidden Mystery was knocked over by a loose horse, an animal, as it happened, that was a stable companion of the winner, Ambush II. I confess that my sympathies in the race were with Manifesto, for it would have been a grand thing to see that good horse win for the third time, with 13 st. less 1 lb. only on his back. He certainly seemed to win with 7 lb. in hand last year, and there appeared reason to suppose that with 6 lb. more than he carried in 1899 he might just have got home; but probably few people realise what a few pounds mean on this course, and the 12 st. 13 lb. was just too much for him. I must add, moreover, that I thought Williamson rode a bad race, for at one time he was with the leaders, then dropped back to almost last, drew up again, retired, and then finally came to the front. There may have been reasons which onlookers could not see,

but it certainly looked very haphazard. The handicap was really quite a triumph for Messrs. Mainwaring and Topham. They were generally criticised for having overweighted Ambush II. and Hidden Mystery, but the two started hot favourites; the former won, and the friends of the latter maintain that he certainly would have done so had he stood up. We have heard this about a great many other horses in the course of the last few years; but I suppose that an animal does not start at 7 to 2 for the Grand National without a reason. I may perhaps be permitted to remark that, of the fifteen horses I picked in the February number, before the weights appeared, five started, one (Hidden Mystery) was knocked down, and the other four supplied the first, third, and fourth. Romanoff was, of course, another of them, and his friends will not be persuaded that if all had gone well with him Ambush II. would have given him 6 lb. and beaten him. On the whole, therefore, it may perhaps be claimed that the fifteen were not badly selected.

Opponents of the starting-machine are usually satirised by its supporters as fossils, wrapt up in antique prejudices, and too blind to see what is before their eyes. The description does not appear to be precisely accurate, for one reason because some of the oldest of racing men appear to like the machine and a great many more of the youngest to dislike it exceedingly. It is ridiculous to suppose that any human being can be entertained by being kept waiting on a stand with his race glasses fixed on a number of horses which do everything except form themselves into a line, which keep breaking away, running half a mile, being tediously trotted back, and performing the other wearisome vagaries with which we are all so painfully familiar. That is bad enough on a fine day when you are not in a hurry; in wet, cold, and windy weather, when perhaps you are huddled up in an uncomfortable place, and want the race to be over before darting off to catch a train, the delays are more exasperating still. There must be some reason, therefore, why so many people continue to dislike the starting-machine the more they see of it, and these reasons are easily found. One of them is the unquestionable danger which attends its use. At Northampton three jockeys were dragged off their horses; they are not the first that have met with accidents, and if Weldon had been killed I suppose the starting-machine would have been abolished.

But apart from the risk of the affair not acting properly, there is the extreme probability of horses and riders being kicked when a field of starters is jammed up together in a line; and it will be very surprising indeed if some excitable animals do not occasionally dash into the machine before it is raised and come to grief that way. [I had written this before the very thing happened at Nottingham, proofs of these Notes and the paper with the account of the mishap reaching me together.] I have seen some starts this spring, and that most of the jockeys hate the contrivance is abundantly evident. No one will now pretend that good starts are assured. If the Brocklesby were run over again the same result might or might not be attained; but beyond doubt the start was a wretchedly bad one, Bogun, who was greatly fancied, never getting off at all. I greatly dislike the idea of schooling young horses to the machine. The ordinary business of training is quite enough without this, and a serious source of mischief is that some horses take the same rooted dislike to it which is felt by their owners and riders, and will never be persuaded to jump off on terms with others who take to it kindly, so that bad starts are to be constantly expected. There is, of course, some saving of time—that is to say as a general rule, for when the machine is not used we often see the flag fall without delay, and when the machine is used delays of more or less tediousness not seldom take place. On the whole it certainly seems to me that the machine does, on a balance, more harm than good.

Lord Wemyss sends me a letter on the subject of hunting men as a defensive force, and though his suggestions have already appeared elsewhere I must not neglect to carry out his request to mention the matter. He is no doubt right in saying that 'if hunting-men would organise themselves as a branch of our auxiliary defensive forces no such effective force in these days could be found all the world over.' It seems that the Yeomanry used to be called 'Hunter Horse,' and Lord Wemyss's suggestion is that each Hunt in the United Kingdom should form a unit. There are more than two hundred Hunts in the United Kingdom, of various sizes of course; but if every one of them found only an average of five-and-twenty men ready to join, there would be over five thousand soldiers of a very special class. 'They should carry an infantry rifle, not the comparatively useless cavalry carbine,' he writes, 'following in dress, equipment, drill, arms and tactics, the

model of Colonel Bowers's "Hants Horse" which he raised forty years ago. They were the admiration of all military men who saw them, and,' Lord Wemyss says, 'represented by far the most efficient cavalry force he has ever seen.' His idea appears to be to create the body for home defence. A useful preliminary step, it seems to me, would be to form a little committee whose first duty would be to communicate with Masters of Hounds, and thus get in touch with the various Hunts.

The backer of horses is usually a very bold man, and those who are willing to take 5 to 2 about Forfarshire for the Derby certainly seem to come into this category. No one can possibly know whether a three-year-old stays a mile and a half until the animal has shown its capacity to do so. I have heard it argued that the way in which Forfarshire ran at Sandown and Kempton last year strongly confirms the idea that he is a stayer. He may be so, of course, but I do not understand how that impression was conveyed by either of those races, seeing that at both places he was shut in, was forced to wait, and won at the finish, in the Kempton race, by reason of his speed—had he been able to get through a little sooner speed might very likely have enabled him to beat Democrat also at Sandown, where he had 9 lb. the best of the weights. I am not, of course, suggesting that Forfarshire does not stay, but no one can possibly know that he does. In any case 5 to 2 seems a ridiculously short price to take so long before the race. Writing, as I do, early in April it is impossible to offer any opinion about the three-year-olds, but I should certainly not advise anybody to bet on the Derby till the Two Thousand Guineas has been run. If, as seems highly probable, Elopement beats Democrat and Diamond Jubilee at Newmarket, the claims of Forfarshire will appear to be strengthened. Between Elopement and Democrat no trustworthy line seems to be obtainable, but it struck me that there was more room for improvement in Mr. W. Low's colt than in the American chestnut. Diamond Jubilee's more recent outbursts of temper have been attributed to trouble with his teeth, with what truth I do not know. In spite of the excuses that have been made for him, for some reason or other he seems a most uncertain animal, whom it may be wisest to leave alone, in spite of his creditable performances last autumn. It would not at all surprise me to find that in the course of the next few weeks the views which are now

held about the three-year-olds have undergone a good deal of alteration, by the coming to the front of some animals which at present are very little thought of. At the same time I expect that before these Notes appear Elopement will have won the Two Thousand.

A correspondent writes to me as follows: 'Those of your readers who, like myself, have been for a number of years up for election as playing members of the M.C.C. will agree with Mr. R. D. Walker's remarks in the March issue as to the desirability of restricting future elections to playing members. It was generally understood that the claims of candidates who were willing to play for the Club were preferential to those of candidates for ordinary membership. But latterly, it would appear, the rule has been changed, and playing and ordinary candidates stand on the same footing. Few of the candidates who had been up for election as playing members were in a position to become life members on payment of £200, which is tantamount to the annual subscription for sixty-six years. It seems to me that the executive body of the club in stipulating for £200 as a life subscription did not show that spirit of sport which was to be expected from the first cricket club of the world. As Mr. R. D. Walker says, the executive body might have found some better means of raising the money to pay for the building operations recently carried out at Lords. The action they took was a bid for the plutocrats. Candidates longest on the list might have been given the option of paying £50, free of annual subscription for say ten years, and after that period of paying the usual annual subscription of three guineas. The money would thus have been raised without any difficulty and at the same time some encouragement would have been given to cricket-lovers like myself who have been vainly endeavouring, even on the basis of playing membership, to gain admittance to the club. I may mention that those whose names were put down in the eighties understood that under ordinary circumstances they would be elected after twenty years. But the admission, some years back, of two hundred life members at £100 a head to pay for the St. John's Wood extension, and last year of a further two hundred life members at £200 a head, has deferred the chances of candidates of the eighties another decade or more, and this unfairness causes much discontent.'

The Badminton Magazine

THE KEEPER'S TELEPHONE

BY ARCHIE ARMSTRONG

'QUEER thing, a knight, sir. Donno that I ever 'ad to do with one before the governor. You see 'e ain't a lord, neither 'e ain't a gentleman.'

'Not an esquire, Trumbler, eh?' I suggested, not that I need have corrected him. Sir George Bestall has made millions and bought Belhurst Park, but has not yet attained to the peerage, which his soul is believed to covet; and his head keeper's definition of him was in terms, so far as I knew, absolutely correct.

'But then 'e's a millionaire,' said Trumbler, as if that gave him, as no doubt it did, a status not provided for by Burke, but capable of inspiring a respect peculiar to itself.

'And he does the shooting all right?' I suggested.

'He's a good enough shot 'isself,' said Trumbler meditatively. 'But 'e 'as some rum 'uns for friends; there was one of 'em a week ago, when we shot Hill Top Wood, sent his valet round to my place here the night before with two sovereigns, and "Would I put Mister summat"—I forget his name—"in good places." I'd rather the governor 'ud do a little more for 'imself, sir, I would. I don't want to go offending no one, but I reckon Sir George has a good pair o' guns and a good eye and some practice, but 'e ain't got the knowledge of the

thing bred in 'im, so 'e leaves it all to me an' looks on till the birds come over.'

'Did you take the money?' I asked. I had known John Trumbler since I was about two feet high and he was lad under my uncle's keeper. Later on in my career he had crawled beside me along a hedgerow to see me knock over my first rabbit, and be knocked over myself simultaneously with the other end of my muzzle-loader, or rather his; so I felt that I had claims on John Trumbler's confidence. I had, moreover, bicycled eight miles from where I was staying to find out how he was getting on in the very snug billet which strong recommendations from sundry of my near relatives had secured him.

'Did you take the two sovereigns?' I repeated, rather inquisitorially.

'I did so, sir,' he answered grimly. 'And put the little gentleman with the beaters till 'e got ten yards in front of 'em and blamed nearly blew my 'ead off over a cock pheasant that was going forward cheerful. Then I reckoned I'd rather earn my money than die sudden.'

'So he got the good places after all?' I asked.

'Them or near them; but I 'ad Colonel Sadler and Parson Thorne from Eastwater right and left of 'im, and 'inted to them they need not be particular. Lord, sir, if that parson preaches as straight as 'e shoots 'e ought to bring down hangels to listen to 'im. They 'ad seventy between them at one stand, and the parson 'e owned to forty, and the Colonel to twenty-eight, but the little gent was quite 'appy and made it up to a fiver when the day was over.'

'You've got a nice house here,' I remarked. We were standing outside his front door, and as I looked at his creeper-covered porch and the muslin curtains in the windows I could not help wondering how long honest John Trumbler would stand so much prosperity.

'Carpentering done for you, too?' I added, pointing to a man who was coming out with a bag of tools in his hand.

'Some new clamjamfrey of the Governor's,' he answered. 'I ain't asked what, yet: why bless you, sir, if he ain't made me ride a bi-icicle.'

'A what?' I said.

'A bike, sir, same as you have there. He thinks we can slip round at nights quiet and quick if we hear anything wrong; there's roads all round us here; there's a main road right through the top part of the property, the second keeper lives

close to it, and there's the footpath you came along just past the door here ; so a chap can get about slippy if 'e has a mind to.'

'Are there many poachers hereabouts?' I inquired.

'Not just here,' he said, 'but there's a terrible hard lot up round Bluestone Quarries five miles away. I got three of them put away for a couple of months netting partridges early this season, and the worst of 'em, Joe Skinner—Black Skinner they call him—swore he'd do for me when he kem out. I reckon 'e'll 'ave thought better of it by now.'

John Trumbler squared his huge shoulders and showed his teeth in a good-humoured grin. 'Come in and have some tea, sir, won't you, if I may make so bold,' he added. 'I'd be honoured to show the missus and the babby—but don't you say the word "poachers;" mind. It scares her terrible to think of Black Skinner, and what he said about me ; she saw it in they confounded newspapers.'

I went in and was duly introduced to Mrs. Trumbler, of whom I had heard when he married her three years before. She was quite worth 'showing,' as he expressed it, a bright-eyed rosy-cheeked bustling little woman, who looked as if she could cook and make a man's home comfortable. She gave me some most excellent tea, of that I can speak with certainty, although afternoon tea is a form of promiscuous feeding that I rather despise. Even the 'babby' struck me as quite unobjectionable. I don't as a rule take kindly to them at that age (which I should say was something not much over a year old) ; nor do they as a rule regard me with any favour. John Trumbler's child, however, which I understood to be a girl, was like his wife, fresh looking and clean, and I let it hold my finger in its tiny grasp without a shudder.

It would hardly let go when the time arrived for me to depart, if I desired to get back to my friends in time to dress for dinner.

John Trumbler came out with me and helped me to light my bicycle lamp, and then, perhaps on account of a shame-faced wish to show me a new accomplishment, brought out his own machine as well, and said that he would accompany me as far as the main road.

John was distinctly a beginner ; he did not find it easy to mount and catch his pedals in the gathering gloom, so that I had to give him a helping hand, after which he twice overran the edge of the footpath, and only just returned from wild

excursions on to the rutty turf without mishap. I noticed that his employer had entrusted him with a first-class bicycle of a somewhat lighter make than I should care to see myself on if I weighed fourteen stone like John Trumbler. When we got to a point where our footpath was crossed by another almost at right angles, John failed to negotiate the corner altogether, and fell over in so unexpected a direction that I nearly came on the top of him.

'Cuss bicycles,' he said briefly but earnestly. 'This is your path to the left, sir; the one we came up is a private one. This one that crosses it and goes up to the high road and down to the village is public, so that any blackguard who likes can come along and hide in they bushes and watch me out of my cottage if he chooses to. That's why I seldom comes this way.'

We wheeled our bicycles uphill as far as the main road, where we parted company, John informing me that a quarter of a mile's ride on the road would bring him to the second keeper's house.

'And that's on the main road,' he added. 'But the governor don't seem to mind, and of course it has its good side: he can watch the carts easy. Steady, you brute!'

He was anathematising his machine and running it in short swoops all over the road, so I gave him a push off after steadying him till he found his pedals.

'You'll find it handy some day when you can ride it; you'll be able to get quickly all round and hear if everything's quiet,' I said, soothingly.

A grunt from the distance was his only reply; and I reflected, as I pedalled swiftly away into the twilight, that contact with millionaires had not, as far as I could judge, been for the good of John Trumbler: he seemed to be getting a touch of what is known as 'swelled head.' Perhaps the pleasantest part of my visit to him that lingered in my mind consisted in a picture of a cottage interior, with a broad-shouldered, heavy-featured man following with his eyes the movements of a trim-built woman holding a laughing baby in her arms. I wondered if I ought to have complimented him more pointedly on the charms of Mrs. Trumbler. He was certainly very fond of his wife.

II

A month later I was again in the same neighbourhood, the same friends having asked me down to help shoot their coverts

I HAD TO HELP HER TO ARRANGE IT

a second time over and to devote a few days to other amusements. There were ladies staying in the house, and on one of the off days we organised a grand expedition on bicycles to see something or other, ruined and said to be Roman, which interested none of us but served as an excuse for a day without chaperons, ending with a ride home in the dusk. It was lovely, still, wintry weather, rather cold but quite dry. One of the ladies had a fur collarette that was highly becoming, a Russian something or other. Before starting for home I had to help her to arrange it, or rather to find a very small hook and eye buried in the long fur just under her chin. It took me some time, and when we had finished the others had gone out of sight. We never caught them up, and I believe we came back by a different way, but I enjoyed that part of the ride even when it began to get dark, until my companion expressed a desire for afternoon tea.

I suggested that we should be back in plenty of time for dinner, but nothing would satisfy her.

'I would rather go without fifty dinners than one tea,' she exclaimed; and it struck me that mere beauty in Miss Rushworthy was no compensation for such an animal attribute as greediness.

'Can't we try that cottage?' she asked, pointing to a spot of red light about twenty yards from the road. 'I expect they are used to bicyclists.'

I thought then, and I have had no reason to alter my opinion, that charming as Miss Rushworthy can be, any gentleman who persuades her to go through life hand in hand with him will have to let her hand be the upper one. There was a young man at the house at which we were staying, who had remained behind because he despised bicycles, to whom I had thought of giving a word of warning on the subject. I have not given it, believing that if he is good enough for her, which is a question for her to decide, he will marry a young lady whom he should be proud to have won. He has since given way, and begun, under her tuition, to learn to manage the 'infernal machine,' as he calls it, and I am not going to interfere—she looks so happy. Having digressed so far, I may say that as I contemplated that cottage window, and was urged to approach it and demand tea for my companion, I wondered how I should feel if stray men and women invaded my humble home and expected me to turn it into a temperance hotel; but I saw no means of escape, so alighted and knocked at the door. A

man opened it in a velveteen coat, corduroy breeches, and brown gaiters, the very type of a keeper—the stage-type at all events. I opened the conversation by asking where we were, and whether he could supply matches for our bicycle lamps. He was civil enough ; after all, a man in service of any kind has usually learnt that if a stranger is of a certain stamp civility pays, and he came at once down the path to the gate pulling a match-box out of his pocket.

'This is Belhurst parish, sir,' he said, 'the village is down in the valley.'

'Ah,' I said, relieved, 'is not this Sir George Bestall's place ? I don't know him, but I know Trumbler, his head-keeper ; do you work under him ? Which is the way to his house ? '

My companion interrupted before he could answer, having come half-way up the path to meet us. Miss Nellie Rush-worthy took the matter of tea into her own hands, declared the adjournment to Trumbler's out of the question, and before he had finished lighting the lamps Sir George's under-keeper had been assured that we should give no trouble whatever ; that if there was no tea-cake in the house buttered toast would do as well, that cream did not really matter, and that any sort of cake would do—or jam—or honey—or treacle. I forget the precise details, but that is the general impression of her requirements conveyed to me by her conversation with the under-keeper and later with his wife. It was all conducted, however, with so many dimpled smiles framed in the fur collarette, and with so much charm of manner, a charm I had myself felt earlier in the afternoon, that tea was promised and in a few minutes was on the table before us.

We were just discussing it when the watchful-eared under-keeper seemed to hear a sound of which I was unconscious, and remarked :

'There is Mr. Trumbler, sir.'

John Trumbler greeted me with friendliness and listened with affability to my explanations as to why we had not visited him first. He still gave me the impression of being not quite unspoiled by affluence, and of feeling inclined to talk of people rather more in my position of life than his own, in a tone that I did not altogether like.

'Came up on my bike, sir, that is, the governor's,' he said, with half a wink, 'saw your bit of ironmongery outside. Makes you puff a bit coming up a hill, don't it, miss ? ' he added, turning to my companion. She smiled graciously and asked

him if he had ever ridden down a poacher on his bicycle, to which he answered, rather contemptuously, that he had not tried, and, turning to me, added 'Black Skinner and his lot is out of quod, but I don't reckon they'll try round my way again, for all the pretty things they said about me, the——'

As he paused for a word I hurriedly called his attention to something on the wall of the kitchen in which we were drinking our tea. Of course it was quite clear what it was, but I asked if it was another novelty provided by Sir George for his benefit, and how he liked it.

'The tallyphone?' he exclaimed, 'oh, bless the thing; that's what they were putting up the night you came to my place. The governor says he can ring me up sharp whenever he wants me, an' so can Tom he says, but I don't want Tom ringing me up; Tom can come down and see me when he's got anything to say.'

I suggested that the telephone might be a rapid and secret way of communicating at night, supposing that he or one of his under-keepers suspected the presence of poachers, and wished to arrange a combined onslaught upon them.

'Then I'll ring up Tom,' said Trumbler steadily, 'I ain't a going to have no under-keepers ringing for me, as if I were the 'ousemaid, not by a long chalk. It's just like the governor; but I've took the bell off my end.' Again he almost winked at me.

'I think we must be going,' I said, rising. I did not like the way in which he spoke of his employer, and I was not sure that telephones and bicycles might not be of some use on so large a property as Belhurst, with its unwieldy big woods, and with the amount of game Sir George expected to be brought to the gun.

'Good-night, Trumbler,' I said, slipping a coin into the under-keeper's hand.

'Ping-ng-ng-ng.'

There is something about a telephone bell that makes it more irritating than any other electric bell, perhaps because its distinctness contrasts so painfully with the conversation that is to follow.

'Confound that bell,' said Trumbler. 'See to it, Tom. They've got a sort of central office, you see, sir, fixed up at the bailiff's, so as he can swish it on where its wanted. I shall have to put the bell on at my place again when the governor comes back from town.'

'Can't get no answer, sir,' said Tom, from the other side of the room.

'Let me try,' I made the suggestion after noticing that Tom approached the telephone as if it was a venomous insect that needed delicate handling. I knew the beast better. I twirled the bell-handle viciously and said, 'Are you there?' in the tone of acidulated despair one acquires from such practices in the metropolis.

'I can't make anything of it,' I said at last.

Miss Rushworthy laughed one of her mischievous laughs, and offered to take a turn, looking very pretty as she stood with her head on one side listening.

'It's the bailiff's slavey playing with the blamed thing,' growled Trumbler resentfully.

'I 'eard you all right 'arf an hour ago,' remarked his underling.

'Did you ring it off? eh?' asked the head-keeper.

'I did nothing to un, Mr. Trumbler,' replied the man nervously.

'Then it must be on to my place still,' reasoned Trumbler.

'I can hear nothing,' said Nellie Rushworthy, 'except something that sounds like a child crying; perhaps there's something wrong.'

Trumbler looked as contemptuous as a fairly well trained gamekeeper could look when looking at a lady, and remarked that when he left his cottage five and twenty minutes earlier in the evening the baby was on its way to bed in its usual health. He seemed to think that anything wrong was out of the question in his well ordered establishment.

'I believe it *is* a baby crying,' persisted Miss Rushworthy. Women seem to us sometimes limited in their ideas and John Trumbler said emphatically:

'My baby can't climb no walls and ring no telephone-bells, and my wife wouldn't let un; I can't ring back neither, 'cos I've took the bell off, an if she wont listen an' answer, what can I do? Nothin! don't pay no heed to it, Tom.'

'But suppose there is something wrong,' persisted Miss Rushworthy, 'suppose the poachers have come, and she can't speak or doesn't know what to say, or they won't let her.'

I fancy I looked rather contemptuous myself at this string of alarmist suggestions, and the telephone bell rung again.

'Ping-ng-ng.'

'Yes!' said a voice behind me, that was like no voice I had heard before. 'The lady's hit it—it's Black Skinner.'

I tried to say that really there was nothing to show that anything was wrong, and that Mr. Joseph Skinner would not try to communicate by telephone, but John Trumbler had vanished through the door into the foggy darkness. 'Come on, Tom,' he shouted through the gate, while I had a glimpse of Tom running a bicycle across Mrs. Tom's flower beds from a shed somewhere at the side of the garden.

'Come along,' cried Nellie Rushworthy to me—she was in the road already. She usually takes three minutes to mount, start, and arrange her skirt in even folds at the back, but she was full forty yards ahead before I had taken the three hops that I require before rising more or less gracefully to my own saddle. When I caught her up, which I did with difficulty, she was riding hard about three yards behind the under-keeper. Her lamp illumined his broad back, and I felt glad we had lighted up. I could just make out John Trumbler pounding away several lengths ahead.

'Are you really going with them?' I gasped, 'just think; it may be nothing.'

'If it's nothing it doesn't matter going, if it's anything I'm going to see the fun.' She laughed over her shoulder.

'Look out then,' I exclaimed, 'there must be a turning presently.' Just at that moment I saw that Trumbler had swerved round sharp to the left, and somehow we all managed to follow him without mishap. During the next few moments I remembered how four weeks ago Trumbler had been the merest beginner, and reflected that he was scorching ahead of us without a light along a public footpath about four feet wide, with an incline of about one in twenty-five.

'Are you mad?' I called out to my reckless companion, perhaps I should say my leader. 'For heaven's sake be careful, there's a sharp turn to the right directly.'

'All right, don't keep so close,' she answered tranquilly. I believe she had told me of prizes won at gymkhanas; I can quite believe it from the way she took that next corner, but why she did not side-slip I do not know, nor I rather fancy does she. I did not take it at all. I suppose I funked it at the pace, for I rode off full tilt on to the grass, and next minute went head over heels into a furze bush with my machine on top of me. I shut my eyes, clenched my teeth, and waited for the shock of mother earth. Instead I fell through a dense mass of prickles on to something which, though softer than I expected, because it gave way, was harder than I quite cared for. It

grunted and lay still; then as I picked myself up it moaned a little and also swore in a husky undertone, so that I began to think that there might be an exciting finish to our mad ride after all. That furze bush was exactly where Trumbler had suggested that a man who had come along the public foot-way might watch him out of his cottage, or, of course, await his return. However, the man I had fallen on was, for the time, past giving any alarm, so I left him, straightened my twisted handle-bars, mounted and rode on, feeling a little dizzy from my fall.

'Come along, please! *Do* come quick!' cried Miss Rushworthy's voice as I jumped off outside Trumbler's cottage just in time to avoid a machine that was lying across the path. She was standing outside the cottage door. Inside we could hear a baby crying and a woman moaning to an accompaniment of shuffling feet and heavy blows. I opened the door and Nellie Rushworthy almost pushed me through the doorway. 'Go in quick, and help them,' she exclaimed.

Inside, Trumbler's wife with the baby in her arms seemed to be leaning against the dresser, rocking herself backwards and forwards. She was crying gently, while her baby was screaming, and I wondered why she did not try to escape from the room. The under-keeper had got a man beneath him on the ground, and was struggling to hold him there, striking at him with his fists whenever he could get a hand free to deal a blow. Trumbler had a burly giant by the throat with both hands, and was pinning him against the wall, dashing his head against it at intervals with all his might. The giant's strength was evidently failing, his head went back with less resistance each time, and his eyes were beginning to protrude, which, as his face was blackened all over, did not look pretty. Just then something moved on the floor at the other side of the table, and a third man, dressed like the others in a smock-frock, with his face blacked, struggled to his feet and seizing a chair made for Trumbler. I was just in time. I have nothing particular to say as to my part in the affair, having been officered throughout by Miss Rushworthy, but I fancy if I had not been there, the man and the chair in Trumbler's rear would have turned the scale against the two keepers. As it was Trumbler heard the scrimmage behind him, dropped his man, who fell with a thud on the ground, and when he said, 'All right, sir, leave him to me,' I left my man and turned away. I could make allowances for Trumbler but I did not want to look on.

TRUMBLER HAD A BURLY GIANT BY THE THROAT

'Lend me a knife!' said Miss Rushworthy; she really was the calmest of the party, and I obeyed orders again. I then saw that Mrs. Trumbler had been securely tied to the dresser with a half-inch cord. We released her and helped her into a little parlour that opened out of the kitchen, where I lit a candle while Miss Rushworthy laid the poor woman on the horsehair sofa with her child, now sobbing quietly, clutched to her breast. 'I suppose the lamp is safe in the other room,' said Miss Rushworthy, a minute later.

'It's on the dresser,' I answered. But there was no longer any likelihood of its being upset; the fighting was over; we could hear blows falling regularly, like the flails I can remember having heard as a boy descending on corn in old-fashioned granaries. It was about time that I interfered again.

'Trumbler,' I shouted, going back into the kitchen, 'Trumbler, you can't take the law into your own hands like this.'

'Can't I?' he said grimly, straightening himself and dropping the leg of a broken chair. 'Well, I've done it, sir, an' there won't be no law over this. They won't want law and I shan't. I've had all I ask for, and I reckon I'll be let alone. Come on, Tom.' The biggest man was still insensible; the two keepers took him by head and heels and carried him out on to the footpath in front of the cottage.

'I reckon they've a cart handy somewhere, that'll take 'em back to Bluestone Quarries,' said Tom as I looked to him for explanation.

The other two ruffians managed to limp out groaning, and stood by their companion, feeling their bodies and limbs with shaking hands.

'When Black Skinner comes to,' said Trumbler to them, 'tell him not to come my way again, or next time I may not loose hold; and tell him, will you, that I know all about how Bob Richards died.' In the dark, with their faces smeared with soot and blood, I could not see if the latter veiled threat conveyed anything to them. I noticed as they managed to get their leader to his feet that their smock frocks, adopted I suppose to make all look alike, had been stripped from them, and that their ordinary clothes were those usually associated with gypsies and poachers. Miss Rushworthy had come out. 'We had better get back to dinner,' she said to me in cheerful even tones adding, 'you will find your paraffin barrel lying about somewhere, Mr. Trumbler, they were going to burn your house down, and they tied your wife to the dresser while they looked

for it, so that all she could do was to hold the child up to the telephone bell, and whisper to the dear little thing that turning the handle was a game. Poor mite, it was clever to do it! I don't quite know what they were going to do to her before they set light to the house.'

'Grr,' Trumbler snarled through his teeth and glanced in the direction in which the two least injured poachers were limping through the darkness down the hill towards the village, half leading, half carrying Black Skinner.

'Leave 'em alone, they've had about enough,' I said.

'My man's collar bone went, I knows, and I don't reckon his ribs feel healthy neither,' added the under-keeper. Trumbler then turned to Nellie Rushworthy, his voice breaking as he said, "And I thought the tallyphone was foolishness of the governor's, and that you was talking nonsense, saying something might be wrong—and you saved my wife, Miss—you saved my little wife just by keepin' on about it—you saved my darlin', God bless yer.' He was beginning to choke hysterically but Miss Rushworthy stopped him.

'Hadn't you better go to her?' she asked in a matter of fact tone, examining her lamp, and beginning to wheel her bicycle up the path. 'I expect she wants you, and we must get on.'

I tried to express my own compliments to her as I followed, but all she would say in reply was:

'Anyhow I'm glad we stopped for tea.'

PAGES FROM A COUNTRY DIARY

May 2.—I have seen a May fox killed; a thing, by the way, more often talked about than done. I have been on a visit to some friends in the North for a few days' trout-fishing, and on the very eve of my departure thither received a mysterious telegram to 'Bring some hunting things'; so mufti breeches and butcher boots formed an incongruous addition to waders and brogues, while a crop presented, as I thought, rather a shame-faced appearance when strapped up with a bundle of fishing-rods. The hospitable house to which I was bidden lies in one of those favoured North-country valleys the fortunate inhabitants of which can enjoy almost every sport—except deer-stalking—obtainable in the United Kingdom within ten miles of their front doors. A great nobleman hunts the fox four days a week without subscription; a lesser territorial magnate pursues the timid hare on the same terms on off-days; the higher portion of the dale includes some of the best grouse moors in the world, which slope down to a famous trout and salmon river; in fine, to a man who can cheerfully brave the climate of the northern portion of our islands, there can be no more desirable place of residence.

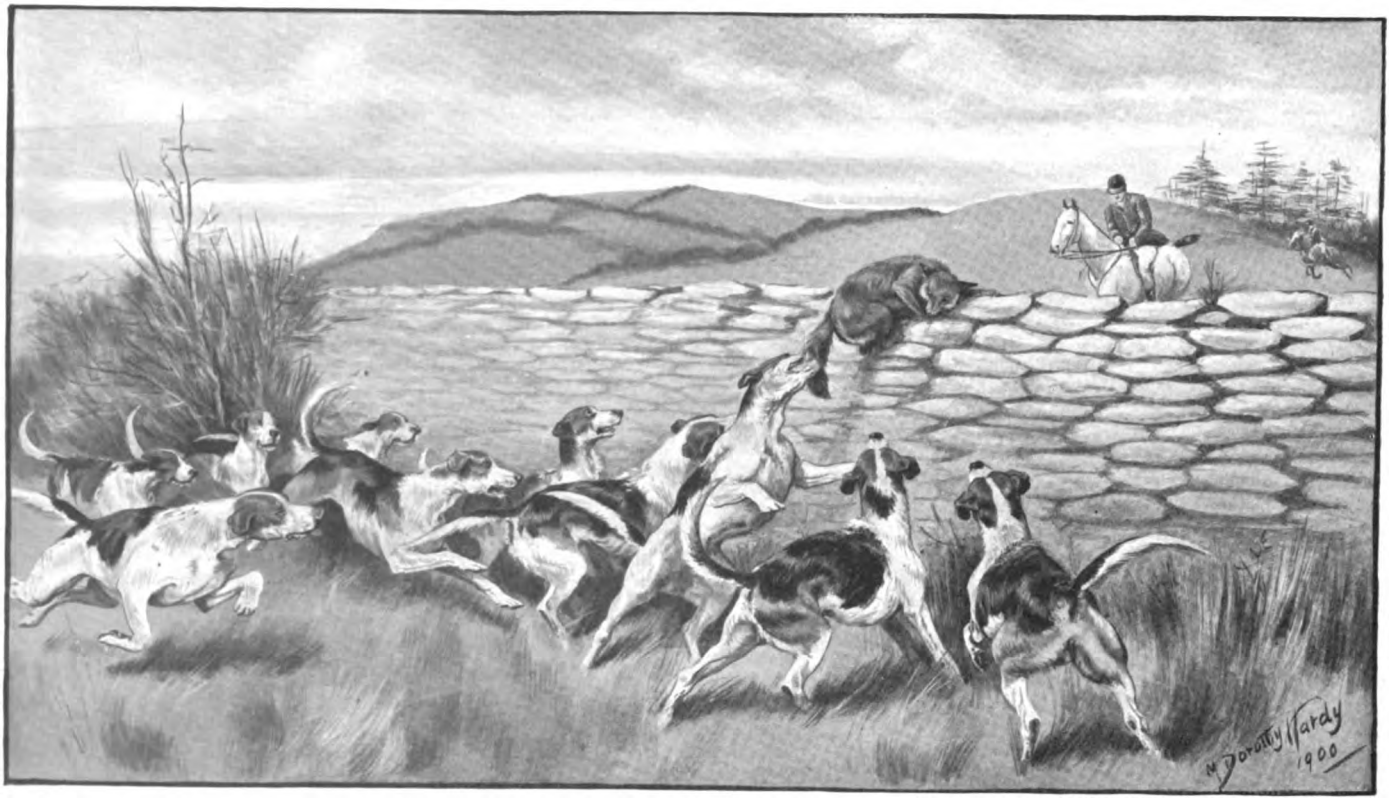
To-day the meet was on the high ground towards the head of the dale, and as we jogged quietly along to covert I could not help noticing how the vegetation altered as our road rose higher and higher above the valley. Oaks and beeches soon gave way to sycamores and ashes, and Scotch firs and larches gradually took the place of these; tillage fields became less and less frequent until they were entirely merged in the universal green of the upland pastures; rough stone walls superseded quick-set hedges; and the air grew stronger and keener with every mile of ascent. And what a view we got when we finally reached our tryst; a dense fir plantation on the very summit of a great green hill whence the ground fell away on all sides! Beneath us the low country stretched for miles, shivering

and simmering in the haze of the noon-day heat through which the river shone like a trickle of quicksilver, and above us brown moors rolled, vast and mysterious, as far as the eye could reach. I was assured that on a clear day one could make out the towers of the great Minster forty miles away across the plain ; and though I thought privately that it must require a *very* clear day and a *very* strong telescope to do so, I somehow liked to think that it was possible.

It was with a view to catching a certain notorious old fox, whose ravages on the hen-roosts of the neighbourhood had depassed the limits of bucolic forbearance, that this late meet had been arranged in deference to the entreaties of the neighbouring farmers. He was reputed to generally inhabit the very wood where we met, where, indeed, hounds quickly found him, but it was a long time ere he could be induced to leave his home, by which I cannot help thinking that he sealed his own doom, for to be bustled for an hour up and down a dense fir plantation on a hot May day cannot but have an exhausting effect on an elderly fox of full habit. I viewed him myself, crossing a ride, long before he was eventually holloa'd away, and even then his knavish tongue was hanging piteously out.

When at last he was forced to quit the covert his line took us over enormous undulating enclosures of short green turf, divided by great stone walls rendered unjumpable by a strand of wire run along their top to prevent the black-faced sheep of the district trespassing on their neighbours' pasturage. Consequently we were only called on to adopt what Whyte-Melville used to style 'a Newmarket seat,' and gallop from one gate to another, a safe and exhilarating form of exercise, where 'the best is as the worst,' but a mile or two of which brought us to some moorland where the going was treacherous and where it became a case of 'follow my leader.' I had never seen hounds run over heather before, and was curious to see if these would do as the Devon and Somerset Staghounds are reputed to—string through it in single file—but found that here they spread and drove just as they had done on the grass.

I was not sorry when our fox left the moor to try and get back to the covert where we had found him, for the crumbling peat hags and quaking mosses presented unaccustomed terrors to my South-country mind, and, I am afraid, made me communicate some of my nervousness to the steady old hunter I was riding. More big grass enclosures, a scramble over a gap into a little tillage field—what on earth was it doing up there?—



ONE OF THEM GOT HIS BRUSH IN ITS MOUTH

a momentary check in a larch-grown ravine, more grass again, and then, with one great scream of melody, hounds ran from scent to view.

Poor old fox! he lay down on the far side of the first wall, and gained a minute's respite as the eager pack flashed over him; next we saw him crawling along its flat top, snarling weary defiance at the shrieking, baying hounds that were leaping and snapping at him, and then one of them got his brush in its mouth—

> T'was a stout hill fox when they found him,
> Now t'is a hundred tatters of brown.

A *stout* hill fox he most undoubtedly was, for I never saw so fat a one, despite a grey muzzle and almost toothless jaws, but none the less, on the sworn testimony of all the farmers who were present, the most notorious old hen-killer in the country side.

It is always these fat old foxes, that are too infirm or lazy to hunt wild things for their food, that swell the Hunt poultry bills: they hang round farms and scavenge on the middens for refuse, and soon learn how much easier and pleasanter it is to pick up a fat hen or turkey, than to spend an hour crawling up a nasty wet ditch on the chance of a rat or a rabbit.

Much as I enjoyed my day's hunting, I enjoyed my fishing more. Every morning after breakfast I was packed into a pony trap and driven miles up or down stream as the case might be, and then left to my own devices for the rest of the day; with no attendant keeper to vex me with clumsy, if well-meant, attentions; with leagues of preserved water before me and not a soul on it but myself; above all, with the knowledge that the whole soft Spring day was my own to spend by the beautiful river. While life can afford me such pleasures as these I desire no greater ones.

What a charming river it was, typical of a score of others in the bonny North country, running between gentle green sheep-trimmed hills, backed by the purple moors! It flowed under cliffs of limestone, where gnarled ivy-grown trees sprang from the crannies of the rock; through far pastures where great short-horned cattle came down to drink of its waters, under hanging woods of tenderest green, and between low sandy banks hidden 'neath masses of campian and willow herb, and huge umbelliferous burdocks. Sometimes it slid gently over a bed of flat smooth rock, sometimes it rippled and flashed over a gravelly bottom; it widened out into deep, still reaches,

where its lazy current was scarce perceptible ; it raced through gorges where its waters, streaked and flecked with foam, ran black and irresistible. Water-ouzels—most friendly of birds—piped and flitted from stone to stone ; wood-pigeons cooed softly from the woods ; jackdaws chattered and quarrelled in the cliffs ; and once a kingfisher, flashing and shining like a piece of inlaid jewellery, flew so close to me that I could have touched it with my rod.

I spent four happy days amid these surroundings ; days of pure enjoyment. If there *was* a thorn to my rose, it was that the weather was rather too fine, from an angler's point of view; but to me this only proved an additional source of delight. There was hardly an hour in the day when trout did not rise more or less freely, and though they did not run very large—my biggest fish was exactly 18 ozs. in weight—they were as game in the water as they were good on the table. But, above all, my chief pleasure lay in the complete and delightful solitude of the riverside. I only once came across another human being, a grey-headed old shepherd, with whom I foregathered over a pipe of tobacco. He was a typical North-countryman, quaint in speech, hard-headed, independent, and a bit of a sportsman to boot. We presently fell to discussing fox-hunting, of which he was an ardent if humble admirer, and pointing to a large deep pool by which we were sitting, the old fellow told me it was called Dowson's Hole, because many years ago a hard-riding farmer of that name had lost his life in it. Hounds had run their fox across the river, which was in high flood at the time, and of the whole field only this one man essayed to follow them, with the melancholy result that he was swept away to perish in the pool which still bears his name. I mildly remarked that this seemed to have been rather a foolhardy feat to attempt, when my new acquaintance, eyeing me with scornful pity, curtly replied : 'Mistor Dowson was pairfectly reet, *he was followin' t' hoonds !*'

This is what we all want to do out hunting, but I am afraid the old shepherd's standard would have been a bit too high for most of us.

May 6.—I reached home late last night only to find my worst fears confirmed. That infernal housemaid had taken advantage of my absence from home to 'Spring clean' the smoking-room. I had been haunted all the week by a foreboding that she would do so as soon as my back was turned, and the consequence is that it will take weeks for my sanctum

to regain its habitual appearance of comfort. It smells painfully clean ; the furniture has been arranged according to Mary's—and not my—notions of what is right ; and, worst of all, the jade has taken upon herself to dust my books. These she has replaced on the shelves, neatly classified according to their binding but not their contents ; an arrangement which has doubtless gratified her æsthetic eye, but which has produced some very ill-assorted neighbours, Boswell's 'Life of Johnson' looking thoroughly ashamed of its propinquity to some re-bound novels of de Maupassant, and 'Handley Cross' shouldering Mantell's 'Wonders of Geology,' a handsomely bound work presented to me on leaving school, which I have never yet had sufficient leisure to peruse.

I suppose Spring cleanings are inevitable in all well-regulated establishments, but I don't seem to remember them when I lived in London chambers as a young man. At all events, I could always find my pet pipe when I wanted it, which I was unable to do this morning.

May 13.—Last night to the Parish Council, where, in a sitting of about twenty minutes, we completed our usual business of doing nothing with punctuality and despatch. I confess that, taking them as a whole, I am very sceptical as to the efficacy of the various Local Government Acts with which both political parties favour the country from time to time. As far as my limited experience goes, the work of purely county administration, formerly controlled by Quarter Sessions, was better and more economically carried out by the magistrates than it is at present ; but I suppose the new democracy must be humoured, and occasionally given a fresh plaything to amuse itself with ; as, for instance, the enormous and hideous red-brick edifice, which has been erected in our little county town at a cost of many thousands of pounds to the ratepayers, for the use of the County Council. Its exterior is, as I have said, unsightly to a degree, but its interior arrangements, its council chamber, its consulting-rooms, its committee-rooms, its clerks' offices and its library, are all furnished and decorated in the most lavish style and illuminated with the electric light. It certainly seems unnecessary to my simple mind that the four or five score gentlemen who meet a few times a year to settle the finances of our little county should be so extravagantly housed ; but then I am only a ratepayer, and not a County Councillor. However, I suppose it is all good for trade.

Apropos of which, I may mention a perfectly veracious

anecdote of a 'labour' representative on the Council of a neighbouring county, who, addressing his constituents when seeking re-election, summed up his services in the pithy remark, 'Whenever theers been ony mooney to be spent, ar've arlways voated for spendin' it.' As three-fourths of his audience were workingmen who paid no direct rates or taxes, these liberal-minded sentiments touched a most responsive chord in their bosoms.

Similarly a good many years ago I chanced to be in one of the smaller towns of Northern Italy, where I was struck by the enormous number of brand-new statues representing famous Italians of every period and degree, from Dante to Cavour, with which the little city was adorned. Commenting on this to an Italian gentleman I met at my hotel, I complimented him on the patriotism of his town. '*Altro, signor,*' he replied with a most expressive shrug of his shoulders, 'it is not that we are more patriotic than our neighbours, but that our Syndic's father-in-law is a sculptor!'

But in one respect I think that unstinted praise must be awarded to local self-government, and that is in the effect it has had on the housing of the working classes. It is now no longer possible for any one, be he great landowner or speculative 'jerry builder,' to put up the wretched insanitary hovels formerly deemed good enough for the labouring poor, and far too many of which still remain. Only last week, riding home through W—— Park, I met my friend Captain H., the agent for the property, and at his invitation turned aside to inspect some new covered cattle-yards which he had just erected on the Home Farm, and of which he was reasonably proud. Indeed, they were the best of their kind I have ever seen, and I was able to render them my warmest admiration. Dry, roomy, warm, well ventilated and well drained, they were an ideal resting-place for the final stage of a fatted bullock's career.

But soon after parting from H. I presently came on the reverse of the medal, for my road led me past the cottage of one of the labourers on this very farm, a miserable one-storeyed edifice of two rooms, one the kitchen and sitting-room, the other the bedroom, where

> Man, maid, mother, and little ones lay,

and as I rode on, two more lines from that same terrible poem kept time in my mind to the rhythm of my horse's feet:

> Worse housed than your hacks or your pointers,
> Worse fed than your hogs or your sheep.

ATTENDED BY HIS GARDENER BEARING A SACK

Long experience of both the agricultural and industrial poor has convinced me of one great fact—namely, that the better the house the better citizen the man who lives in it. I recognise to the full how earnestly most landowners and their agents strive nowadays to remedy the evil I have just touched on.

May 19.—To shoot rooks at M.'s, a form of amusement for which I have very little affection. Where the nests are built in very high trees, and some skill is requisite to bring down the birds—I am, of course, alluding to shooting them with a pea-rifle—it can, as to-day, be made an excellent excuse for meeting one's friends and indulging in a copious lunch, but under no circumstances can it be dignified as a sport. However, rooks must be thinned down, and no doubt there exist people who, like the fat boy in 'Pickwick,' have ulterior thoughts of rook-pie, a dish the mere sight of which is sufficient to produce a feeling of nausea in me.

Arrived at M.'s, I found a large party armed with more variety of rifles than I should have thought it possible to collect in our peaceful country district. One guest alone, the vicar of the parish, came provided with a shot-gun, with a view, he assured us, of only shooting such of the young birds as were able to fly, and would not sit to the rifles. It is, perhaps, needless to remark that, once the business of the day had been started, the good man spared neither age nor sex, nor sitters, nor—when he could hit them—fliers. He was attended by his gardener bearing a sack wherein to deposit the corpses of the slain, and it was a sight for gods and men to see the pair of them stalk a half-fledged rookling clinging squawking to a branch scarce fifty feet above their heads. Having cautiously approached within what he considered range of it, the worthy padre, in order to obtain greater accuracy of direction, would rest his gun-barrels against the trunk of a tree, and then, closing his left eye, while the gardener shut both *his* optics, would take long and deliberate aim at the bird. Presently the gun would go off with an earsplitting report—he used black powder in brown cartridge cases—and the rook, or what was left of it, would fall lifeless to the ground, when the gardener, who appeared to be somewhat of a sycophant, invariably exclaimed, 'Bewtiful, sir,' and placing it in the sack, accompanied his master in search of another victim.

It is such little incidents as these that serve to *égayer* the poor fun of rook-shooting, while the good vicar was so enthusiastic over his sport and took our chaff so well that we could

not but respect him. I wish more parsons were sportsmen; their flocks would like them none the worse for it, and it would do both them and us laymen equal good.

May 29.—To dine and sleep at K—— Barracks, where Jack's regiment is quartered. What good fellows and what charming hosts soldiers are! In the days of my youth I had great leanings towards a military career; indeed, it was only the shortsightedness of the Civil Service examiners that prevented my becoming a field-marshal, and to this day I cannot hear a drum-and-fife band playing such a tune as 'The British Grenadiers' without every nerve in my body tingling from unreasoning excitement. I think, however, that what delights me most whenever I am thrown among soldiers is their perfect discipline and obedience. Was it not Thackeray who said that he always looked on a soldier with respect, as a man who, if ordered to, 'would draw his sword and cut off my head'? I have exactly the same feeling regarding Thomas Atkins, especially in view of the often unpromising material out of which he is evolved.

But two years ago I swore in, as a recruit for the Coldstream Guards, young 'Arry Brown, the most unpleasant character among the young men in the village. Not that he was entirely bad, but he was an idle loafing fellow, without mind or manners, who would never do a day's work, and who was fairly launched on the broad way that leads to Quarter Sessions. I can see him now, round-shouldered and scowling, unwashed and unshorn, stumbling hoarse-voiced through the oath of allegiance, a striking contrast to the dapper recruiting-sergeant who brought him to me. Eighteen months passed, and behold 'Arry home on furlough, trim and smart in his white jacket, upright as a dart, civil and respectful in speech, and looking all men straight in the face! Moreover, what his mother proudly described as 'quite a scholard.'

I wonder what his fate would have been if he had not taken the shilling!

A great deal has been said and written lately about the shameful expense forced on young officers in the army; and quite recently Mr. Wyndham, speaking in the House of Commons—I quote from memory—remarked that it was little short of a scandal that a young man entering the army should require a private income of £150 over and above his pay. Possibly this may seem to be the case at first sight, but I should like to know in what other profession a youth can start

in life with sufficient emolument to render him independent of private means or an allowance from his parents. Is this the case in the Church, the Law, Land-agency, or at the Bar? Are the salaries paid to junior clerks in the City or in Government offices such as they can live on? It is true that a subaltern's pay is absorbed by his regimental expenses, but in what other walk of life can a gentleman be boarded, fed, and served at so small an expense? The £100, or £150, which the young officer receives from his father is no more than the pocket-money which the average youth of Public School education is brought up to expect. It will be a bad day for the British Army if it be ever modelled on Continental lines, where—certainly in the infantry—not one officer in fifty is either a gentleman by birth or in the position of one by fortune, and the first person to resent the change would be Tommy Atkins himself.

Apropos of military matters, I have been intensely delighted by a statement in the papers that the Imperial Yeomanry, or such squadrons of them as are raised in hunting districts, do not merely content themselves, when charging, with the ordinary British cheer, but strike further terror into the hearts of the foe by piercing view holloas!

This is an additional point of sympathy between war and the chase that appears to have escaped the notice of the gallant author of 'Pink and Scarlet'; and yet, seeing how a shrill holloa sets men's—ay, and horses'—blood racing and tingling in the hunting-field, one can easily imagine how the same cry would rise naturally to their lips in the maddening excitement of a charge.

At all events it must mightily astonish the Boers!

SOME GOLF DISEASES

A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY

BY JOHN HODGKIN

I HAVE been a golfer for a great number of years, and it seems to me that golf has now become almost an integral part of my existence ; it has been a joy to me in my lighter moods, a solace and comfort to me, in no small degree, in various troubles which I have experienced. I have played over a large number of links, good, bad and indifferent, both in Scotland and England, and it has been my delight, in a quiet way, to note the various manifestations and symptoms of different players under the ever-changing circumstances of the royal game. It seems to me that before I have holed out at the eighteenth hole of my existence, I cannot do better than to attempt a short description of the more prominent diseases of golfers, with a few hints as to their removal and remedy.

I should wish to make a few prefatory remarks as to this peculiar class of mental ailments, for such in reality they are.

First, the patient—poor soul !—is generally quite unaware of the presence of any such complaint, but is peculiarly liable to notice it in others, even though it be but very slightly developed ; the cure is, as a rule, very difficult owing to a large amount of false pride being usually concomitant. Even when the patient *seems* to be humble enough to take advice with a view to the eradication and possible cure of the special complaint, those who are openly the most humble are inwardly the most stubborn, and accordingly the more difficult to cure. I do not propose to specify each minor sort that I have from time to time noted, but shall content myself with giving a few well-

defined varieties, the details being drawn from a large number of actual cases, and classified under the various broadly defined types.

I. STAGNATIO VULGARIS : *Syn.* RETARDITIS DAMNABILIS.

This disease, nearly incurable, is usually recognised and identified by a time-test—if the player succeeds in blocking the green, so that it takes at least two and a half hours to go the round of eighteen holes, you may know the patient has got it fairly well developed.

In this disease the player not infrequently dispenses with the services of a caddy, which renders him additionally slow. A large portion of the time is unnecessarily consumed in taking up his stance—though to hit upon a perfect stance is not always an easy matter. Some days it comes at once; like a poet, *nascitur non fit*, but on others alack! you can't stand as you would like, do what you may. This happens to the best of players now and again, but to our poor friends it recurs at each tee shot, and, in addition, at most of their shots between the tee and the hole itself.

I have tenderly watched them, planting first the right foot in advance, then performing a complete *volte face* and putting the left foot in front; afterwards taking up a position a yard behind and even a yard in front of the ball, and then beginning *The Waggle*. Ye gods! what a waggle it is! Sometimes the club is waggled from behind the ball to almost on a level with the knee, not higher, then down again to the back of the ball (never in front), then up again to the knee, and so on for anything from five to twenty times (I have even known this number exceeded). I remember once seeing a dear old boy, hale and hearty, who had an exact and well-defined number of waggles for each particular club. As far as I can now recollect it was 23 for a tee shot with a driver, 21 for a brassy shot, 17 for a cleek, and about 12 for an iron, whilst the critical number for putting had not been finally determined, but varied from 10 to about 20.

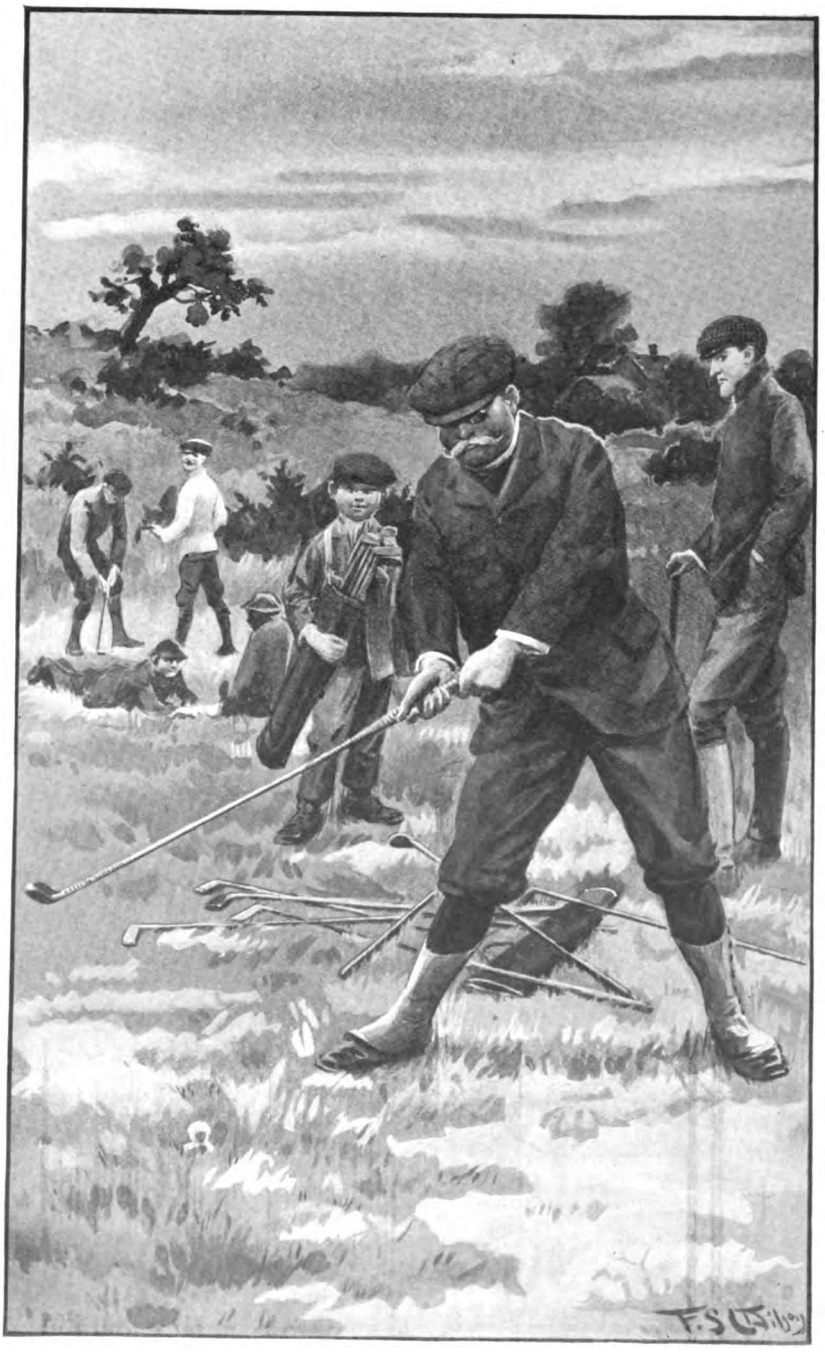
Sometimes the effect of all this waggling seems really to cause the fixation of the eye on the proper spot for a good, well-hit shot; but more frequently the eye gets tired, is thankful to remove itself at the critical moment, and a bad shot is the result.

As an additional means of delaying the green, there is a well-known symptom, namely, that of not being able to make up the mind as to which is the proper club to play a certain shot through the green with. Players have been known to

start with a driver, then take the cleek, then the brassy, and finally the driver, with the correct number of waggles for each club, finally, as might be expected, to miss the shot, and then, as might *not* be expected, complain of having been hurried!

On arriving near the hole, great performances and high jinks are indulged in. Generally the patient takes no caddy, yours is consequently requisitioned, quite regardless of the fact that you may possibly want him, and so the poor luckless wretch has to run about constantly from one side to the other. Then for the putt, the surveying on bended knee of the line of putt from every conceivable position, whether material or not, from all sides of the hole, and from every point of view, and then the stance; frequently the patient glides up to his ball in a semi-mysterious manner, and after having in the course of a few minutes got over the foot-position difficulty, devotes himself to working his body into a most constrained and uncomfortable attitude—the more awkward, apparently, the better it would seem for putting. In the old days of Daguerreotype photography the person undergoing the ordeal *dared* not move for a considerable while. So it is with these poor things. There they stick, apparently not daring to move, and seem to be trying to hypnotise the ball. Occasionally the ball does go down, much to their great delight, but only too frequently is the eye dazzled with looking and gazing so long that it refuses to do its work, a sliced or pulled putt results in a miss, and the whole operation is started *de novo*. As much posturing is required for a 6-inch as a 2-yard putt, and should the 6-inch or short length putt not 'come off,' usually a choice flow of expletives or imprecations follows.

This is a fair sample of one hole; the other seventeen are simply more or less irritating variations. It is useless to *suggest* that a faster couple should pass you, or even when the requisite interval (as prescribed by the new St. Andrews Rules and Etiquette) has been reached, to *insist* on it. It not infrequently happens, when you *have* induced your sluggard to agree to allow the couple behind to pass, that one of the twain, endeavouring to get out of your way as quickly as possible, presses for all he is worth, and foozles. That is your man's opportunity for revoking the permission to pass, and on he goes again. Or supposing that, your opponent having lost a ball, the faster couple wish to pass, he invariably manages to find his just as they are going on, and off he starts again. Such people are hopeless; you cannot mend their ways by any



BEGINNING THE WAGGLE

known method of reasoning, and politeness does not appeal to them. They gradually form a class by themselves, since other players having once experienced the ordeal eliminate them from their list of possible partners in a game.

II. Mendacitis Anarithmetica.

This is a very strange complaint and is by no means confined to either sex. Ladies, indeed, seem to possess it, even in a more marked degree than men, but then, dear things! they never were good at arithmetic. The chief observable symptom is a total suppression of the sense of strict accuracy, coupled with an absolute inability to make two and two anything more than three. Some wonderful scores have thus been achieved, not of malice prepense, but of sheer want of memory. It is also a peculiarity of such patients that though in reality perfectly conversant with the rules, they are ready to forget them whenever it may be conducive to the making of a good score for them to do so. They will even, in playing through the green, not be too particular as to removing twigs, &c., upon which their ball may be actually lying, and if such removal cause the ball to roll out of its position, even say for six or eight inches, they will not be concerned or even disposed to incur the penalty provided for such illegal performances. If you do not catch them *in flagrante delicto*, nothing is said; if you do, they invariably plead ignorance of the rule, even though you may have on many previous occasions called their attention to and explained it.

In bunkers, as a matter of habit and precaution, they invariably leave the truth outside—indeed, I have seen them after having landed their tee-shot in the bunker specially provided for such players, emerge, almost triumphantly therefrom, after about five or six minutes solid hard work, and heard them say, with a beaming countenance, as if flushed with triumph, '2!' or if in a *very* gracious mood, '3!' when you know really that these figures represent dozens and not units as they would have you believe. Finally, according to their reckoning they may do the hole—a bogey 6—in 5, and win it, as they think, from you; and when, as if by accident, you examine their ball, point out at least 10 or 12 separate and distinct mementoes of the niblick, and remind them that the ball was a new one at that tee, they frankly avow that they 'cannot make that out, but perhaps it was 6 and *not* 5 after all.'

In competitions they are rather dangerous. They think all

the time that you are trying to cheat them, so that you may win yourself, quite regardless of the fact that in order to play a good game, all your energies should be devoted to that end, instead of being constantly required in the well-nigh hopeless task of rectifying their imperfect memory. Sometimes on putting greens, a player of this type has been known quite accidentally to move the ball an inch or more, whereupon without your having said a word, he will turn round and say to you, almost angrily, 'That *wasn't* a stroke, the ball *never* moved.' Should you show him how far it moved from its original position, he will probably say, 'Oh! *that* doesn't count.'

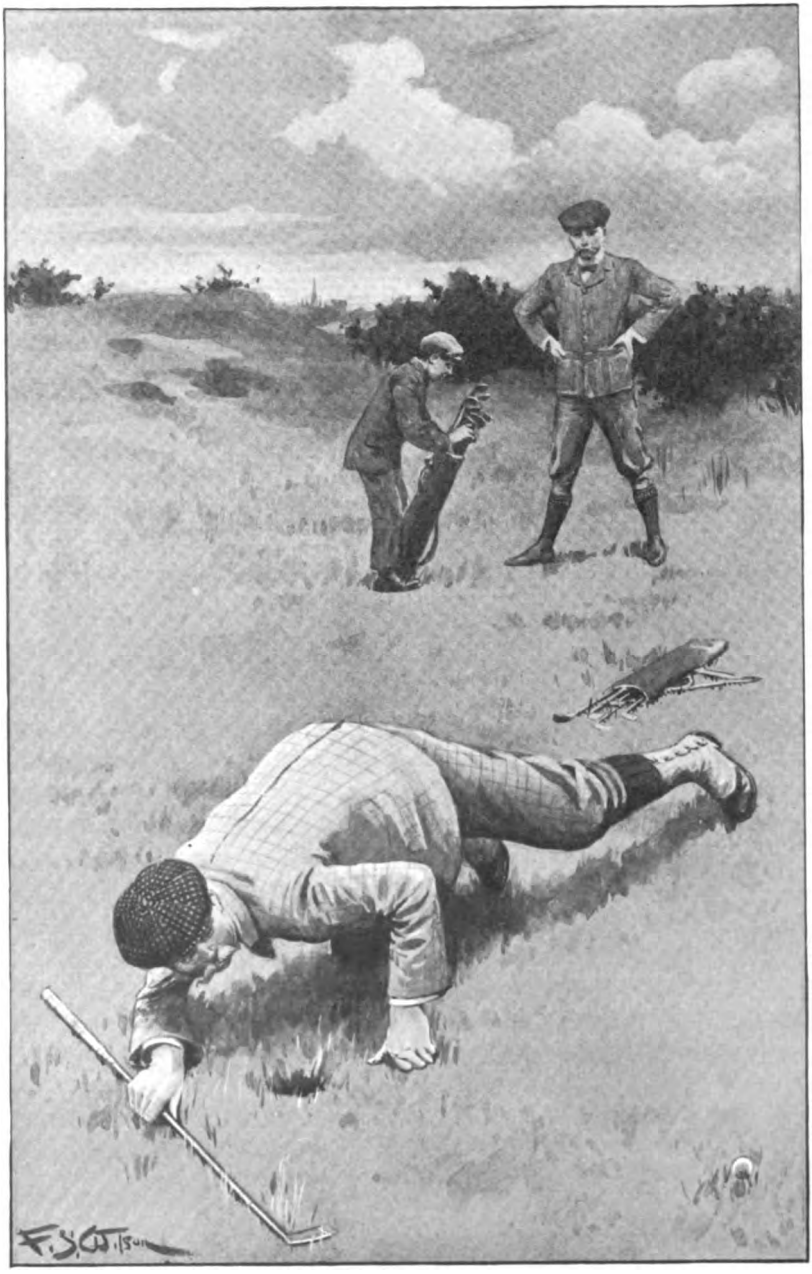
There is only one way to deal with players of this class. Firmly implant on your memory, and on your caddy's, the resting place of the ball after each stroke, and as firmly but courteously, insist on the total number being placed on the card, without allowing *any* discussion after, say, the first three holes or so. You can generally convince the patient about these, and when he sees that you are watching and counting, and that the caddies are doing so as well, he will probably begin to count accurately himself, which greatly simplifies matters.

III. Polyclubia Inanis.

This is a very peculiar disease, being by no manner of means confined to beginners; in fact, it often reaches an acute form of mania in otherwise very fine players. It consists of an inconquerable desire to be possessed of any certain club with which either the rightful owner in the patient's presence, or the patient himself when trying it, has made a fine shot. He generally endeavours to acquire the club, and I am bound to say is willing to pay a price quite incommensurate with its real value. Consequently clubs accumulate to an almost alarming degree. The following may be taken as a typical specimen of such a collection. It consisted approximately of about:

Drivers	8	Heavy irons	4
Brassies	10	Driving irons	2
Spoons (various)	13	Light irons	6
Baffies	2	Light irons for running up	7
Driving cleeks	6	Niblicks	2
Putting cleeks	2	Putters (mostly patents)	12
Mashie cleek	1		
Driving mashies	4		
Approaching mashies	3	Total	82

and sundry nondescripts.



SURVEYING FOR THE PUTT

Of the iron clubs, each special sort contains specimens varying, say, a quarter of an ounce in weight, in an ascending or descending scale, and again varying in the lengths of the hose by, say, quarter inches. Some one club has a finer ring in the metal than another, but doesn't lie right or is too heavy, so he alters the weight (he generally rubs this down at home), then has the lie adapted to his special requirements, then has another shaft put in, because the original shaft was 'no good,' then plays with it for one round, keeps the ball pretty straight, in fact, does wonders with it; presently swears by the club, having found at last what he had been looking for so long. Later on in the day he happens to pull a ball with the self-same club, vows he never held a more rotten contrivance in his hands and either straightway gives it away or sells it for two shillings.

A week, only a week, later, he sees a club in some one else's bag, watches the new owner play with it and make good shots consistently; asks him where he got it (since, of course, with such a multiplicity of clubs individualisation is well-nigh an impossibility), and when told that it is one of his 'cast-offs' he at once borrows it, to get it copied. The copy is never the same as the original, and so the copy soon goes adrift in the same way. Such patients should not be cured too quickly; if they have money galore they *are* incurable; if they have not, the disease works out its own salvation. If the victim contented himself with, and limited his practice to, only five or six well-selected clubs, he would probably play a better game; but he still firmly and ineradicably believes that it is not the fine player but the fine club that makes the fine shot.

ON CRICKET CAPTAINS

BY HOME GORDON

IT is impossible to exaggerate the value of the personal influence of the captain over a county team, the regular members of which seem to be instinctively affected by their leader. Yet the extent of this influence is often unsuspected by the general public. To begin with, it cannot be communicated by the press in their criticisms, which at times suffer from the drawback of being written in the press-box and not in the pavilion. Secondly, the captain's domination escapes the observation of those spectators who only obtain an occasional opportunity of witnessing a big match.

But for those who regularly participate in first-class matches, and to others who make a minute observation of the national sport the chief occupation of their summer months, 'skipperdom' forms an enthralling study. The best judges of the game are well aware that it needs special gifts to make a crack captain. Mere proficiency in technique used to be regarded as the essential. But it is now recognised that to both theoretical and practical knowledge must be added not only experience, but also tact, discretion, patience and other valuable qualities which are sometimes lacking in the average British sportsman.

The scope of the present article will not permit any exhaustive search for the ideal in county captaincy. More especially would such a theme be invidious in the present season when several important changes have been introduced for better or for worse in the captaincy of both Northern and Southern teams. All that is now desired is to offer a few

suggestive observations on various modern captains, which will serve to evoke cricket memories among many readers.

The era of the modern game may be said to date from the visit of the first Australian team in 1878. It is no exaggeration to assert that the superb bowling of Spofforth, Boyle and others in this, and the subsequent elevens of our invaders, would never have gained such success had it not been supported by splendid fielding and consummate judgment in handling the men. So far as the English public was concerned, Mr. D. Gregory was the first materially to modify the arrangements of the field according to the idiosyncrasies of the batsman, thus rendering the diagrams of how to place the field suggestive rather than autocratic. But Gregory's successor, Mr. W. L. Murdoch, went further and it was a most interesting study to see him almost imperceptibly indicate to fieldsmen minute changes of position *between the balls* of an over. These were rarely suggested by the bowlers, but by his own acute observation of batsmen he had, in many instances, never before seen. Of course many cricketers opposing the 1880 and 1882 teams were morally bowled by the reputation of their opponents before they put on their pads. But a larger number were flurried by the new positions of the fieldsmen. Boyle, as he crept in so that (for example at Portsmouth *v.* Cambridge Past and Present, in August 1882) he almost took the ball off the face of the bat, was hardly more bewildering than the way in which point was shifted, while those wily slips moved hither and thither according to the modifications of their shrewd captain. Of course all this became speedily familiar to their opponents, but with a less judicious captain the marvellous sting of the attack might have been lost through commonplace fielding.

In later years Mr. Murdoch curiously modified his methods of directing an eleven. To the end of his connection with Sussex, he was the cheeriest of captains. But the Brighton ground exercised an unholy spell over him. Possibly he never forgot the 286 he himself made there in May 1882. Anyhow he seemed to have accepted fielding out to some three hundred runs as an inevitable necessity. So he would leave his first pair of plain bowlers on until his opponents had often made eighty or so without loss, and then put on half a dozen changes for a few overs apiece in mechanical succession. At times he indulged in little practical jokes as, for example, against Somerset and Cambridge in 1896, when he put himself on to bowl first. But none the less, his fame as one of the greatest cricketers of

the Victorian era will be partially based upon his wonderful handling of those great colonial teams.

Possibly the worst captain possessing famous personal prowess was that finest of all wicket-keepers, J. McCarthy Blackham. The most intrepid of cricketers, with a profound contempt for all bowling and more than a suspicion of unorthodoxy as a bat, with heroic indifference to physical injury (his fingers used to be all warped and scarred by many mishaps) and unrivalled skill behind the sticks, it was a curious study to watch his vacillation as captain. Both in the field and off it, he never gained control over his men.

Mr. Harry Trott must take rank among the foremost as a rattling good skipper. Judgment, observation and admirable imperturbability sustained him amid the vicissitudes of several tours, and he will certainly be remembered, not only for his active qualities, but for the negative quietness of his control in the field. 'He had a perfect genius for changing his bowling,' observed Mr. S. H. Pardon, one of the acutest judges of the game. It is probable that since Dr. E. M. Grace there has been no more brilliant field at point, and it is sad to think of his intellect clouded in his prime. Darling was not behind him. His tactics seemed beyond criticism, and he preserved harmonious relations with his team. A man of singular coolness, he could never be bustled into running the least risk in order to snatch a victory. The wearisome succession of drawn games never ruffled him, and he set the example of monotonous batting with a deliberation that evoked a hostile demonstration at Lord's in the match with Middlesex last August.

The greatest captain of all has probably been Mr. A. G. Steel. Personal enthusiasm for the very best which the game could afford always made him adopt the liveliest tactics compatible with safety. Apart from his individual brilliancy as a cricketer, there was always much to be learnt from his handling of a team. He was perpetually *trying to do something*, not *passively* allowing matters to proceed as is too often the case with other captains. It was recently observed by a prominent county captain of to-day that Mr. A. G. Steel had never gone through the grind of a county season as now constituted. But it must be remembered that he played in every game in which he could participate until business withdrew him, and his skill seemed only ripening with time. To him we owe the most valuable compilation on the game, and he deduced theory from a practical experience which in some ways was unparalleled.

Another great captain of past days was Lord Harris. As in the case of Mr. A. G. Steel, immense enthusiasm was united to great ability. But Lord Harris was a little more of a theorist. No man has done more for the game or so thoughtfully attempted judicious modifications of the laws. This very fact hardly made him as captain so formidable to the team he was opposing. For ever seeking means to improve the game, he at times seemed to try experiments by which modern cricket has benefited, whilst he has boldly taken his stand as a great advocate of fair bowling. His authority was a little autocratic and he never inspired that personal enthusiasm in his teams which Mr. Hornby or Mr. Stoddart could always evoke. Whilst Lord Harris was second to none in judicial discrimination, he sometimes hardly thought it necessary to say the right word which makes slaves of the other cricketers for life.

No other captain ever personally encouraged his men so heartily as Mr. A. N. Hornby. He individually rejoiced at the success of each of his team, and the only man he did not mind failing was himself. Once when he had made a long score and was warmly praised in the pavilion, he merely remarked: 'I am awfully sorry Sugg did not get some. It bothers me dreadfully!' Whenever a Lancashire professional was succesful he received a tip from his skipper: when he failed he was greeted with words of hearty encouragement which set the man right with himself—which is half the battle in the case of a nervous cricketer. It was a nice trait in Mr. Hornby, when captain, on turning out to field, instead of walking towards the wickets, he would at once join the professionals as they emerged from their gate.

Keen as mustard himself, he liked the quality in others. He told the story of a brilliant bat in the Varsity match, at a crisis which held the crowd spell-bound, being found reading a novel in the drawing-room when it was his turn to bat. 'If that had been my son I'd have disowned him,' remarked Mr. Hornby, 'and *yet* he was a good fellow.' The accent on the 'yet' was indescribably comic. It may be added that the hero of this anecdote is now an energetic member of Parliament.

Probably Mr. Hornby wrote the best order of going-in of any first-class captain. He watched the progress of his men with acutest intelligence. The development of the batting powers of Johnnie Briggs for example will be found remarkably coinciding with his place on the card. In the field Mr. Hornby's keenness was evident. His whole soul was

absorbed in getting the wicket of the batsman. When batting he has been frequently censured for running out his partner, but the present writer ventures to enter a defence. Mr. Hornby was not only a fine judge of a run, but he always started *instantly* he or his partner had played. It was his theory that many games have been lost by the runs missed through lack of judgment, and his desire was never to let one escape. If a genuine muddle ensued he always endeavoured to sacrifice his own wicket no matter how crude a bat his partner might be, whilst if he ran Barlow out he always gave him a sovereign. But when the partner started as promptly as Mr. Hornby called him, the run was nearly always feasible, though he at times forgot that other men had not been accomplished hundred yards sprinters like himself.

Of course, Dr. W. G. Grace has been captain more often than any other eminent cricketer, but his direction has many times aroused censure. He has often been accused of bowling himself too long and especially of pegging away with his favourite leg-ball despite severe punishment. The record of a captain keeping himself on longest to bowl was obtained by George Giffen at Adelaide against Mr. Stoddart's team March 1895, when his five wickets were obtained at a cost of 309 runs in 87 overs of six balls each. But Dr. W. G. Grace's methods of handling bowling, apart from his own attack, have often been curious. A number of instances could be given of quite excellent bowlers barely tried during a long innings, whilst others have been employed to excess. The very last week of last cricket season supplies examples. In the final match of the Australian tour at Hastings, in an opposing total of 352 for 7 wickets, he only allowed J. T. Hearne and Young to bowl 19 overs, whilst Mr. C. L. Townsend had 111 runs made off him, and only dismissed Iredale and Noble. In the last game of the year Dr. W. G. Grace also kept the latter bowler on an unconscionable time in order that he might accomplish the double feat of taking a hundred wickets, and scoring two thousand runs in the season, the five wickets he captured against the Home Counties costing 163 runs.

Whilst no other captain has ever more cleverly succeeded in finding out the weak spot in a colt's defence, Dr. W. G. Grace has always a hearty word for a promising player. In days when cricket was not the clockwork affair of to-day, he was always punctual unless a tardy train delayed him, as at Canterbury in 1870; and it demonstrates his keenness for the

game that he is *always* first of the fielding side to emerge from the pavilion. It was part of his good judgment to go in first, for his example always inspired his side with confidence, perhaps because he invariably meets the ball in the middle of the bat—a great object lesson to novices in big games.

Mr. S. M. J. Woods is a born captain, and just because he is so keen a sportsman, he makes the most loyal and willing member of any one else's team. Tremendously strong, his frame has suffered terribly from strains and sprains which have affected his bowling, but his splendid pluck as a bat still renders him worthy of his College epithet 'lion-hearted.' One of his finest feats was at the Oval a few years ago, when he hit Lockwood, who was bowling in his best form, for five fours in one over. Another incident in his career was the conclusion of the University match of 1891. The position was most critical. Berkeley was bowling with deadly effect, his analysis being then 5 wickets for 16 runs. When Mr. E. C. Streatfield was dismissed Cambridge needed 4 runs with only Mr. D. L. A. Jephson (not the bat he is now) to follow Mr. Woods. Most men would have adopted cautious tactics. Not so the redoubtable Anglo-Australian. He caught up his bat, having donned neither pads nor gloves, ran in to the wicket, never troubled to take guard, but hit the first ball to the boundary and ran back to the pavilion, the whole proceedings having barely occupied a minute.

To Mr. D. L. A. Jephson, the new Surrey captain, is attributed (possibly erroneously) the phrase 'if a captain holds catches, the team will'; and a smarter field until the game is a hopeless draw would be difficult to find. It will be recalled that he graduated in first-class cricket in the Cambridge team of 1890, the other new 'blues' being Mr. F. S. Jackson, Mr. E. C. Streatfield, and Mr. A. J. L. Hill. In those days it used to be a cricket problem why Mr. Jephson was played, for his bowling was barely used (he had not then attempted the lobs with which he excels) and he was a very slow bat, who had scanty chances of making runs when he went in last. Few could have imagined that he would have ripened into the fine cricketer who gave that amazing display of slogging at Hastings in September 1899, any more than the persistent failures of Mr. A. O. Jones, both at Cambridge and for Notts in 1893, adequately foreshadowed his happy selection for England in the final Test match in 1899—although Arthur Shrewsbury always had full confidence in his pupil.

Theoretically the ideal position of a captain in the field is that of wicket-keeper. From this point of vantage he can best observe the niceties of play and so direct such modifications of attack as may seem judicious. There have not been many English wicket-keepers in authority even at the Universities, but all the amateurs have won credit. The Oxonians, Mr. E. F. S. Tylecote (1871, 72) Mr. Manley C. Kemp (1883, 84) and Mr. H. Phillipson (1889) and the Cantab, Mr. Alfred Lyttelton (1879) have all left excellent reputations. But Mr. Gregor M'Gregor surpasses them all. It is hardly too high praise to say that he is the best contemporary county captain, as he is also the finest amateur stumper. His judgment is sound, his personal popularity is proverbial, and a more self-effacing, unselfish sportsman cannot be mentioned. It is told of him that bear-fighting one night at Cambridge with Mr. S. M. J. Woods, the latter pushed him clean through a window. Although his hands were fearfully cut he kept wicket next day in his best form. Great as he is, there have been days when the Middlesex captain has been quite off colour, notably at Leyton in 1890, when for Past and Present of Cambridge *v.* Australians he allowed 37 byes. But such occasions have been rendered memorable by their rarity. On the other hand several judges have pronounced his catching Gunn, standing up to Mr. Kortright in Gentlemen *v.* Players at Lords, July 1893, to be the finest thing of the kind ever seen.

Still, his successful Cambridge captaincy was not so distinctive as his wise control of the Metropolitan county last season. In purely University cricket in the past twenty years no skipper has shown ability equal to that displayed by Mr. H. D. G. Leveson-Gower. Imbued with the traditions of Winchester cricket, where special attention is devoted to fielding, at which he excels, he worked up the Oxford eleven of 1896 to an extraordinary pitch of co-operative play. He adopted the Colonial practice of rapidly shifting his men to suit the idiosyncrasies of batsmen and he had the discernment to persist in playing the old blue, Mr. G. O. Smith, when apparently out of form. The consequence was the splendid 132 of the old Carthusian, which materially helped Oxford, forced to go in for 329 runs on fourth hands, to make them for the loss of only six wickets. Since Mr. A. G. Steel, no one except Mr. A. E. Stoddart and Mr. Gregor M'Gregor, has shown such fine discrimination in handling a team as Mr. Leveson-Gower.

Mr. Stoddart appears to have abandoned first-class cricket.

To the universal regret at his retirement in his prime may be added the loss of his admirable disposition of his men in the field. Comparatively few chances have been afforded of seeing him in command at head-quarters, but they sufficed to show him to be in the first flight. From the long-field, where he used to cover ground faster than any one since Mr. Percy MacDonnell, he had migrated to slip, whence he directed his men with quiet discretion. Unlike other captains who have availed themselves of their position to bowl long and often, he did not trundle enough. The same excess of modesty is a fault in Mr. J. A. Dixon. But in all other respects, Mr. Stoddart seemed nearly infallible and the chorus of colonial enthusiasm in this matter endorsed English opinion. So great had been his personal success, so enormous the triumph of his former team, that the comparative ill-fortune which dogged his last tour, and his personal disagreement with some antipodean views, are the more regrettable. But in no way will they cast the slightest shadow on the admiration universally felt for this typical sportsman.

The retirement of Mr. K. J. Key removes a captain who rarely obtained the full measure of commendation merited. His jaunty good humour could never be ruffled by chaff from the crowd, his steady judgment remained unaffected by his own success or the reverse; he took good and bad luck as it came with stolid imperturbability, and the most recalcitrant professional found him a redoubtable master. It was no easy task to follow that admirable leader, Mr. J. G. Shuter, so the more honour to Mr. K. J. Key for making it seem easy and working with such honourable conscientiousness.

No criticism on captains could be considered satisfactory without reference to Mr. A. C. MacLaren, who led England into the field in the four last test matches. Close observation shows him to be not only a decided and self-reliant captain, but one not afraid to undertake risks. The false cricket he asked the English side to play at the Oval was the right game, and his change in the order of batting, the substitution of K. S. Ranjitsinhji for Mr. C. L. Townsend, when Mr. F. S. Jackson and Hayward had made 185 for the first wicket, was admirable, because the situation demanded brilliant hitting. In the field, Mr. A. C. MacLaren bears comparison with the finest commanders, but so far he has not gained that absolute domination over his county team which makes a well-led eleven so additionally formidable. Of course he has been handicapped by only playing in the later portion of each season.

His old schoolfellow, Mr. F. S. Jackson, is another notable leader. Both in 1892 and 1893 he directed the Light Blue eleven, and in the latter year the Oxonians were decisively beaten by 267 runs, Mr. H. R. Bromley-Davenport actually bowling 15 overs for 2 runs and 5 wickets. Owing to the regularity with which Lord Hawke plays for Yorkshire, Mr. F. S. Jackson has since had few occasions to show his skill as a commander. But when opportunity came he was fully equal to all demands, and the team enormously benefited by his resolute leadership. 'Jacksoniana' will form no small part of cricket lore.

Mr. H. W. Bainbridge affords an example of development as a captain. A brilliant Etonian, who covered himself with distinction at Cambridge, he proved himself a very moderate aptain, although he set a fine example by scoring 44 and 79 in the University match. But since then he has steadily trained on until he is now one of the soundest skippers in England. He would soon advance Warwickshire up the list if he could obtain more variety for the county attack.

The youngest regular captain of a first-class county, Mr. J. R. Mason, is doing invaluable work. Following Mr. Frank Marchant, his task is rendered additionally arduous by the great difficulty always experienced by Kent in collecting adequate elevens in the earlier months of the season, whilst the comparative scarcity of professional bowlers throws unusual weight on his own shoulders to afford support to Mr. W. M. Bradley. In time he should play a big part among English captains.

Mr. C. E. de Trafford is in one respect the least lucky of all the captains, for thus far Leicestershire has never been able to cope adequately with the best counties. His methods of direction are quiet and rather deliberative, whilst he never lacks in the field the nerve which makes him one of the most formidable hitters of the day. It says much for his temperament that he has never lost heart in dealing with the disappointing material at his command, and Beaumont College has every reason to be proud of their notable old boy. His brother-in-law, Sir Timothy O'Brien, proved to be a remarkably judicious captain when opportunity came to him. The cautious and thoughtful tactics he displayed when directing Middlesex were completely at variance with the impetuosity of a typical Hibernian temperament.

Two other captains must be recalled from the memories of the past. The late Mr. I. D. Walker, the youngest member

of a great family, always exhibited the greatest keenness in managing Middlesex cricket. How different from the days when Mr. A. H. Stratford and Mr. J. Robertson were the principal bowlers is the present era when Trott and J. T. Hearne form the first formidable pair! His successor, Mr. A. J. Webbe, was an even finer cricketer. In years to come students of past averages will be apt to think that he must have been less brilliant than his figures would show, because his name is conspicuously absent from representative matches. But the present writer has always been led to receive as an accepted tradition that his non-inclusion was due to his own refusal to play.

The captain of a county team, not then in the front rank, once gave advice which bore remarkable fruit. A certain colt's action was promptly and repeatedly no-balled in a trial game, and there was no doubt about the justice of the action of the umpires. The captain called the crestfallen colt and said, 'My lad, you learn to bowl slower, and there is not an umpire in England will no-ball you.' This invidious advice was, it is regrettable to say, given by a clergyman. The novice went home, pondered the suggestion in his heart, and obeyed. He has proved himself a valuable bowler, who has claimed a hundred wickets in several seasons and though his action is absolutely unchanged, not an umpire has ever censured him.

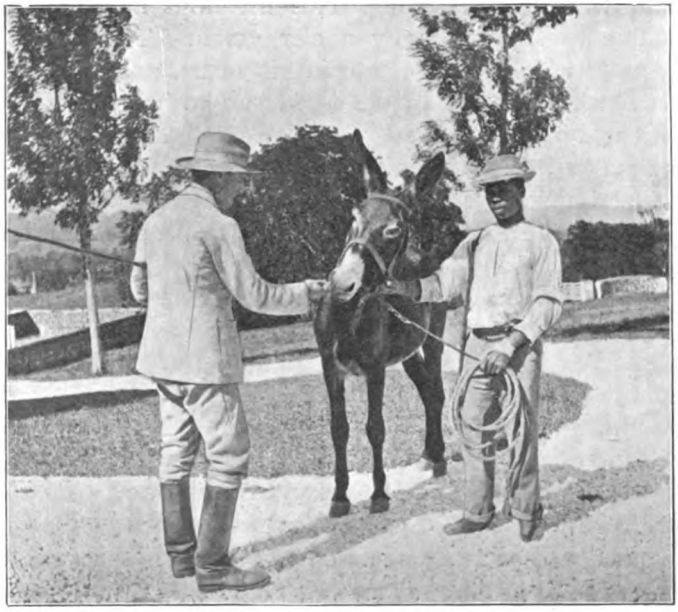
Professionals have enjoyed a curious notoriety for being bad captains, and the Players' team has often been badly handled, though Abel and Arthur Shrewsbury have proved creditable exceptions. On one occasion an eminent Yorkshire professional, engaged in the annual representative match at Lord's, said of his temporary skipper, 'He can bat, and he can bowl, and he can hold a catch if it comes straight at him, but he knows no more about a side in the field than of steering a boat through a rainbow!'

Tom Emmett was notorious for his exuberant generosity in bowling wides. Once when in command of the Yorkshire side he sent down a wide in his first over. Ulyett remonstrated, whereupon Emmett replied, 'That's diplomatics, George, to tickle him into confidence,' and the next ball uprooted the batsman's off-stump, breaking in at least six inches.

MULES AND MULE-BREEDING

BY IAN MALCOLM, M.P.

IN view of the thousands of mules that are doing service in South Africa, it occurs to me that perhaps a paper dealing with the character, qualities, and acquirements of this little appre-

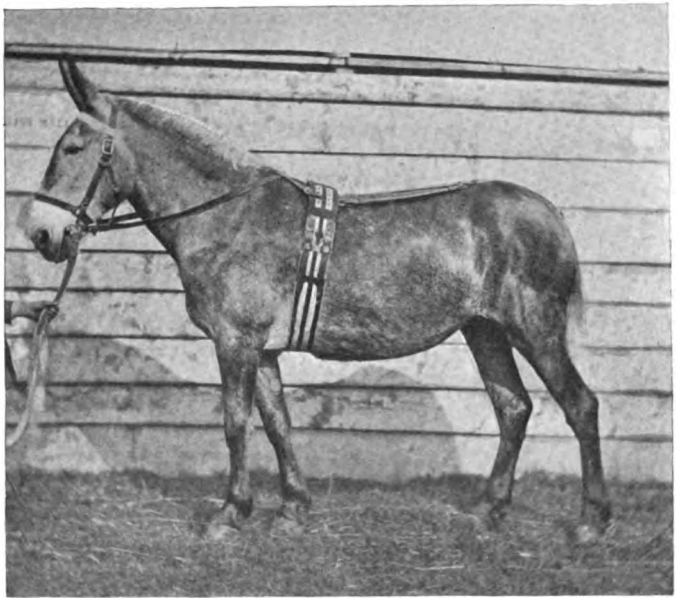


BANANAS FOR BREAKFAST

ciated animal may serve a double purpose. In the first place, to advertise a dumb benefactor to many parts of our empire, and, in the second place, to emphasise our folly in not availing ourselves more fully of his services; for it is somewhat surprising to find that Great Britain alone amongst the civilised

countries of the world has failed adequately to recognise and appreciate the superior qualities of the mule compared with the horse as a burden-bearer.

Yet in all our Colonies, and more particularly in India, mule-breeding is extensively and increasingly carried on ; and from a financial point of view, mule-breeding is decidedly a successful venture. Apart from the undisputed records of breeders in the States, there is the evidence of the lucrative trade carried on in France, Italy and Spain, which contain what

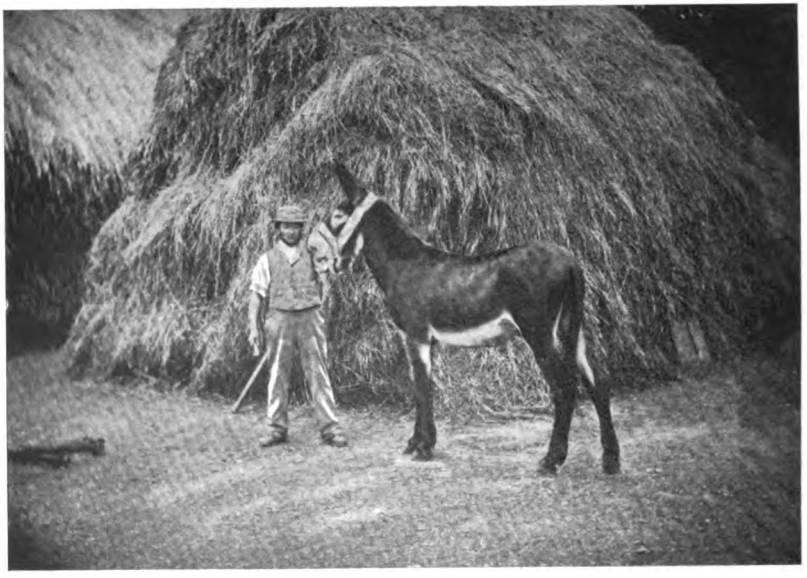


A POITOU MULE ('BEAUTY')

may be termed the mule 'nurseries' of Europe. Of these France comes first, and each mule farm in Poitou possesses upwards of eight mares kept solely for mule-breeding purposes. The methods of Poitou farmers are, however, of a rather primitive character, which the following fact renders sufficiently clear. No brush, comb, or scissors, is ever applied to the Poitou mule, and the owner takes a special pride in the thick, shaggy coat, which the animal develops in the course of a few years. But as one would naturally expect, the unhealthy condition of the poor victim of ignorance renders him liable to a variety of skin diseases of the worst possible character, and the reputation of his breed decreases in consequence.

I believe that in mule-breeding the influence of the sire is

limited so far as shape is concerned, for he transmits to the mule merely the points of head, ear, foot and bone, while the mare is responsible for height and general conformation. This leads me to summarise roughly the different characteristics of a few of the principal breeds of Jacks. The Poitou, which is supposed to have been originally of Spanish extraction, may be said to make good in size and bone what he lacks in courage: the Italian Jack, curiously enough, possesses precisely opposite traits, being remarkably courageous, but deficient in height and

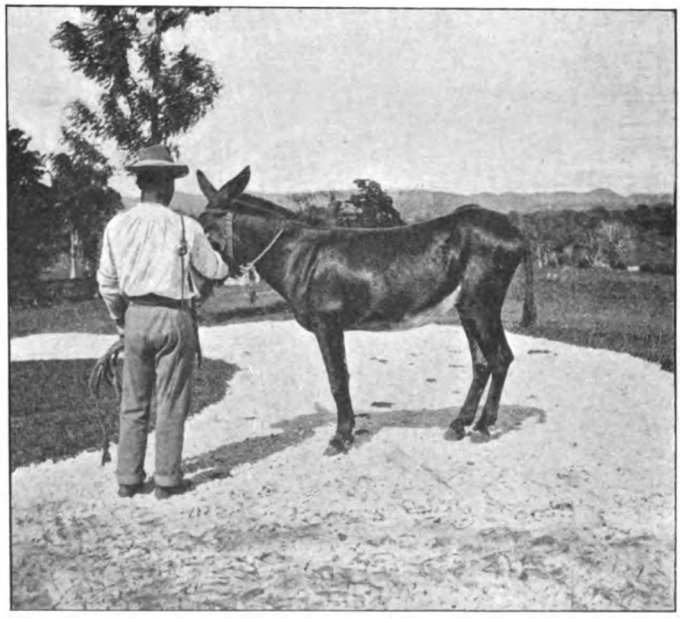


A CATALAN JACK ('IAGO')

weight, and light of bone: the Catalonian is in considerable demand, having size, fair bone, and plenty of courage, but he is apt to be narrow-chested and long in the legs; whilst last, but not least, there is the Maltese Jack, which is used almost exclusively in the West Indies, particularly in the breeding 'pens' of Jamaica. He compares very favourably with the others, for he has fair height and indomitable pluck. Of course it is the aim of the expert mule-breeder, by judicious crossing of the various breeds, to produce all, or as many as possible, of these desirable qualities, and it is wonderful what perfection can be attained in a few generations.

The branding of the mules is a great function on the Knockalva estate in Jamaica, and fills the same place in the

negro calendar as a 'cake-walk' would in the Southern States. From five in the morning, as you lie in bed, you hear the pen-keepers 'hooping' the mules, as it is called, from all the pastures miles away. They utter a curious high-toned cry, which differs, by-the-bye, from the cattle 'hoop' altogether, and on hearing it the animals move leisurely in the direction whence it comes. This is practically their first experience of the domination of man; for, since the day of their birth, they have been left free with their dams to roam about in their allotted pastures. The



A MALTESE JACK ('PLATO')

result is that they are at first anything but tame, or amenable to human persuasion, especially when the nervous snort of the first victim tells them of an unwonted surprise in wait for them within the fold.

There is a small gate leading from the field, where stand a score of yearlings, into a high stone-walled pen. Inside are a dozen bare-footed negroes in their broad straw hats, thin shirts, and blue calico breeches; six or seven lassos on the ground, a couple of stout posts in the middle of the pen, a bright fire burning under the wall in one corner, with a brace of irons bearing the branding mark '7'—that is the *mise-en-scène!*

At a given sign the gate is opened and the first mule is let

into the enclosure. He is quite amazed at being alone and does not move; but a flick from a stock whip sends him galloping round the ring at a fine pace. Occasionally he stops and kicks out with all his might to emphasise his freedom. Then, on again; tossing his head as one or two lassos, in inexperienced hands, miss his neck and flick his ears as they fall upon his quarters. The third cast catches him, however, and then the whole crew dart at the rope, for he is more than a handful for one man. They set their bare heels in the ground and pull

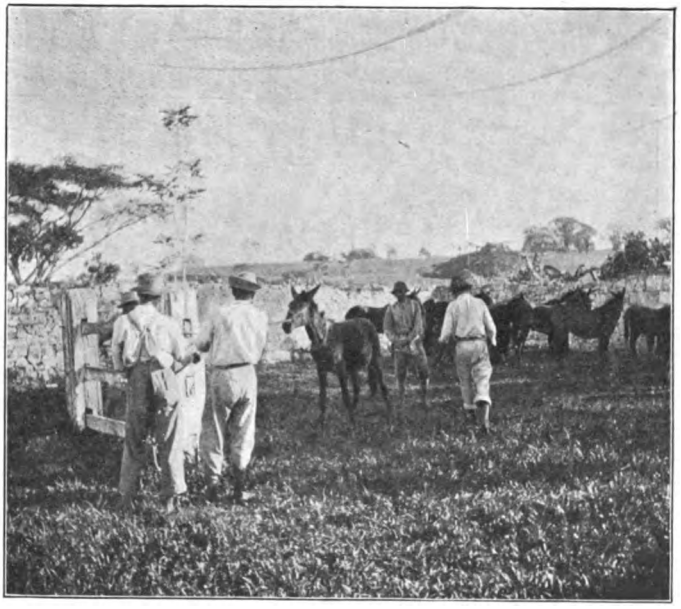
THE MASTER OF THE HORSE, KNOCKALVA

together as though it was (as indeed it is) a tug of war. The mule is making for the gate, the men for the post. Suddenly the animal gives way a step or two, the tension relaxes, and down go the 'boys,' laughing at their own discomfiture; but they don't leave go the rope, and little by little the post is ultimately gained.

The photographs show the contortions and activity of all parties. It will be seen that nothing would be easier than for unskilled hands to damage a yearling mule for life by bad handling, but generations of training and tradition have taught these boys to combine gentleness with strength and skill.

Finally the post is reached, and the great battle is practically over, for the original rope is fastened to it and the mule is cast

by the aid of a second rope thrown between its legs. Thus secured upon the ground, this is the moment to bring out the hot iron, and impress it once, firmly, upon his near fore quarter. It must be agony for the poor little creature for a second, but Jeyes' fluid is gently dabbed over the scar, immediately the instrument leaves it, to cool the wound and to keep away the flies. Then he is released and, good plucked one that he is, he gets up calmly, trots contentedly out of the pen, and in a very few minutes is capering about as happily as he was last night.



A PATIENT SUBJECT

Our American cousins once shared with us a strange prejudice against the mule, and the date of the adoption of mules in the United States is therefore comparatively recent; but, the introduction once accomplished, their superior qualities speedily asserted themselves. We know that General Washington was one of the first to advocate and encourage mule-breeding in the United States by advertising his famous 'Royal Gift,' a Jack ass of superior breed sent to him by the King of Spain; and one wonders now what the mountainous parts of Pennsylvania would do without their large mules to undertake the greater part of the specially difficult work. There they drag huge log waggons over almost impassable tracks of country, through

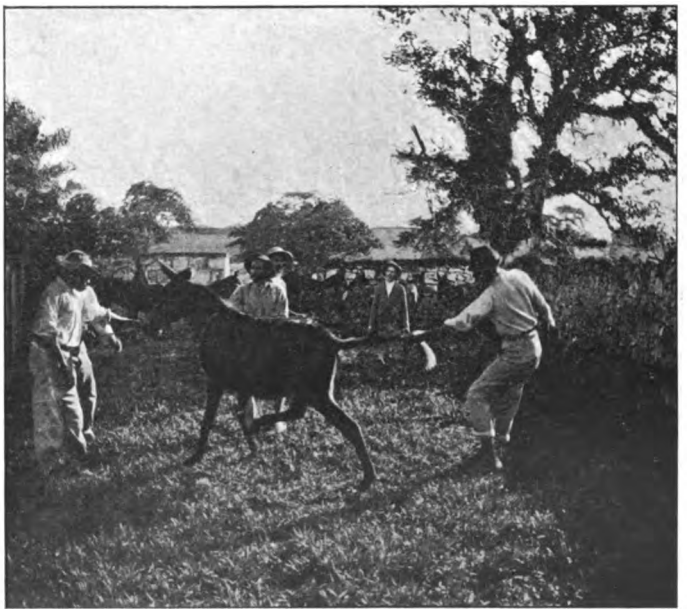
rapid torrents, and among thickets of tangled underbrush—a work for which horses would be totally unfit.

It is indeed the burden of a world-wide testimony that the mule far excels the horse in patience, surefootedness and immunity from disease ; and it is curious to collect the expert evidence available which bears witness to the special points of the mule's superiority. No path is too precipitous and no mountain track too difficult for the nimble and discriminating tread of these plucky little beasts. The hardiest of all hardy

CAUGHT

pack animals, he is not easily affected by climatic conditions, although most at home in rocky and mountainous country. If we compare him with the horse, the mule can endure greater hardships, is more muscular in proportion to his weight, can live on less and do more work on the same nourishment, besides being far less fastidious as to the quality of the food. Indeed, experience has taught us that there is no kind of labour to which a horse can be put that the mule cannot undertake with equal or even greater success, many kinds in which he proves superior, and not a few where he is quite at home while the horse is hopelessly out of it. Notably in mining work the mule comes to the front, and he is bad to beat for

waggon drawing and railroad building, coming in an easy first in any work that demands special patience and staying power. Then also his hearing and sight are superior to those of the horse, and this it is which accounts for his being steadier in harness and less liable to fright. A mule can be worked to exhaustion—how I bless him for this characteristic—but, after a good feed and a night's rest, he will resume his 'daily round' with undiminished energy. In Spain light trotting mules take the place of carriage horses—for they are equally well suited



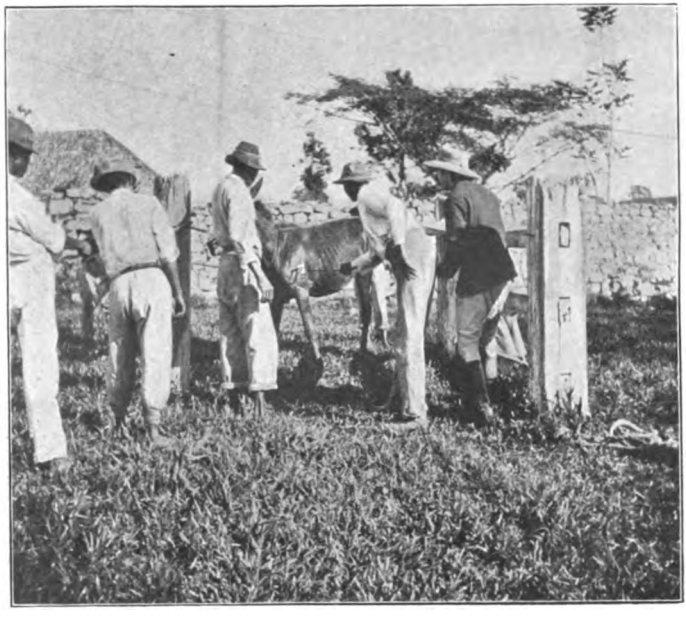
PULL DEVIL, PULL BAKER

for heavy draught work or for light harness—and in some parts of America they draw the street cars. There remain two special traits of this most effective animal which deserve special emphasis—its wonderful longevity, which is proverbial, and its camel-like power of working hard on a small supply of food and water.[1] To bear out the first of these assertions, I know many instances in our army service in India where there are mules of over twenty-two years still doing capital work. As to the latter characteristic, it was never better tested than during the American Civil War, when the mules were frequently without

[1] The Punjab produces a breed of mules of special endurance on small supply of food.

fodder for five days at a stretch and often twenty-four hours without water ; yet under these trying conditions they worked satisfactorily and well. The mules referred to were imported, as is well known, to the United States from Catalonia ; but many people will learn with surprise that Catalonia has to thank the Moors for this addition to its industrial resources.

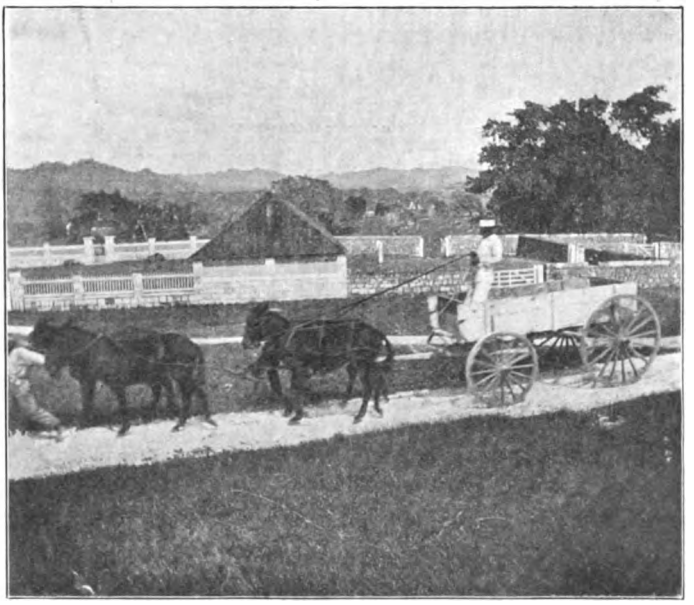
But even the mule is not perfect, although the prevailing impression that he is bad tempered has been satisfactorily disproved; for he becomes vicious only from bad usage, and is



BRANDED

as responsive to kindness and good treatment as any other dumb creature. In fairness to the horse, however, I must instantly admit a weakness which the mule betrays from which his putative relative is exempt. The mule requires a 'lead,' and, strange to say, he can only be led by a horse, for he hates the whole donkey tribe ; and it is a well-known fact that an old mare with a bell round her neck can keep a large drove of mules from straying. The following story is illustrative of this mulish weakness, and of the prevailing ignorance among otherwise well-informed people as to the habits and characteristics of mules. A few years ago, during the course of one of our minor campaigns in South Africa, some officers were instructed to buy

mules for the service. They had to go some distance up country to a breeding farm which was run by an Englishman of undoubted standing and education. The officers were shown a number of mules in an enclosure where two ponies kept them company, and they at once struck a bargain for all of the mules. The owner of the farm advised them to buy the two ponies as a 'lead,' and offered to sell them cheaply for that purpose; but he was curtly informed that the 'orders were to buy mules, not ponies.' It is believed these mules are still—



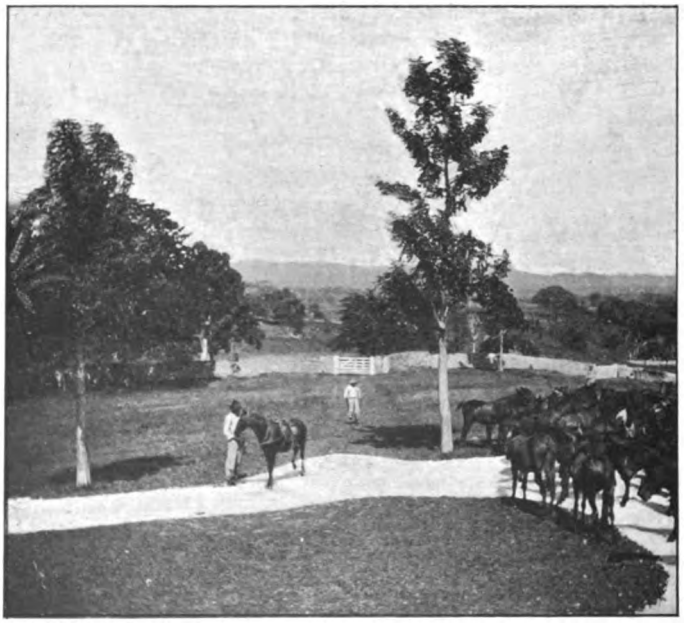
MULES IN HARNESS

with some others, alas!—wandering about the veldt somewhere in South Africa!

With all its desirable qualities of toughness and elasticity, nature seems to have specially designed the mule for transport service; and, in a greater or less degree, mules have been utilised in most of our military campaigns abroad—during the Peninsular War, the Crimea, in Afghanistan, in Egypt, and notably in India. There, indeed, they form part of the permanent transport of the Punjab irregular force, and mule-breeding in India for the army service has lately attracted special attention of the Government.

I cannot but suspect that the achievements as well as the

eccentricities of the mule during the present campaign in South Africa will compel public attention more forcibly to the fact of its existence than a library of books and essays. It will probably henceforth be recognised that in time of war the Empire must trust her own markets for mules as well as for the other accessories of a campaign, and that in time of peace our home army must learn to understand and train the mule.



THE KNOCKALVA PEN, JAMAICA

'*Sero sed serio*,' let the question engage the attention of enterprising breeders who are endowed with courage and capital: these will not, I think, be sunk in vain in an attempt to familiarise our country in the arts of this quadruped 'without ancestry and having no hope of posterity.'

[NOTE.—I must express my indebtedness to the well-known work upon mules by Messrs. Tegetmeir and Sutherland for some of the information contained in the foregoing paper.]

'COMMANDEERED'

BY B. MAUDE

'CONFOUND those infernal Boers, they've commandeered Katerfelto!'

'Hillo, Don! I thought you hadn't energy enough for such strong language. Who has roused you?'

'Don't be so rough on him, Canton, the Don's not all milk and water any way, or he couldn't play polo as he does. Besides, do you mean to say you never heard that he thinks more of Katerfelto than of all the rest of us put together? How often have you gone without dinner, Don, that Katerfelto's forage mightn't run short?'

'A time or two,' answered the man addressed, shortly, leaving the verandah to make his report to his chief. His nickname was due to a certain quaint habit he had acquired of using Spanish expressions when excited or pleased, and also to his polished manners, which the rough and ready youth of the Rand considered better befitting the court of old Spain than the clubrooms of the Transvaal.

All the women were devoted to him, and he repaid their affection and hospitality by the alacrity with which he executed their various commissions, having always leisure for those little attentions neglected by less busy people. To the men he was an enigma. Why should any man, especially a poor one, come to Johannesburg to loaf? Still, even they admitted that he was unrivalled as a polo player, and were proud of the triumphs he scored for their club, though his undoubted skill at a game requiring not merely pluck and fine horsemanship, but prompt-

ness and careful generalship, only increased their astonishment at the contradictory phases which his character exhibited.

At the beginning of the 'Crisis' he had enrolled himself among the defenders, only stipulating that he should be used for mounted service; hence his presence at the outpost in the nunnery commanding the Pretoria road. This being the point upon which the Boers were certain to concentrate themselves in the event of an assault, its defence had been entrusted to the most experienced officers the town contained. They had selected their men with some care, and were in command of a picked force about 500 strong, most of whom could shoot, and all of whom could be depended upon in an emergency.

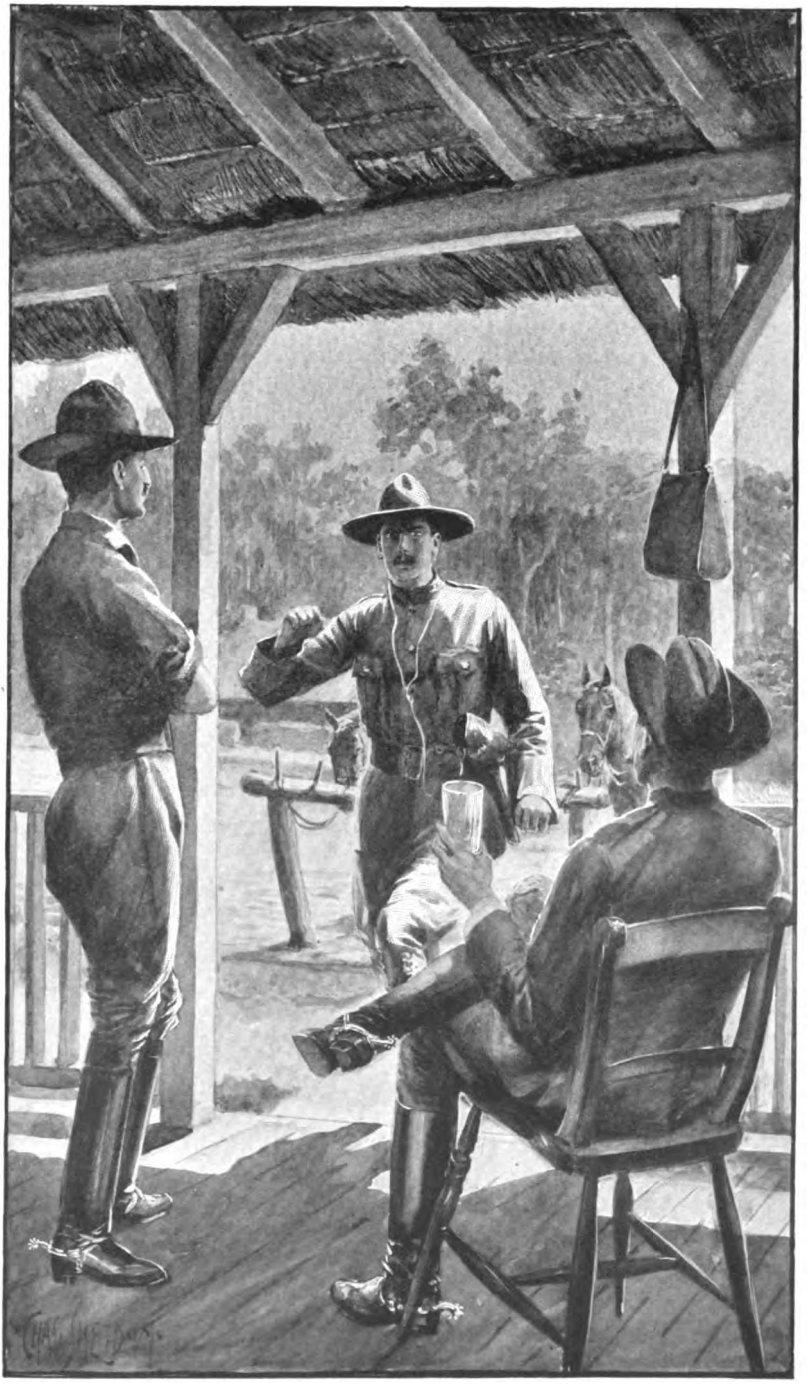
Elliot, otherwise 'The Don,' his particular friend, Fred Laurence, and Harry Canton, a young barrister, had all been attached to this brigade as orderlies, and were kept hard at work carrying messages to and fro.

'Tell us about the pony,' said Laurence, as Elliot returned, flung himself into a chair, and swallowed in great gulps the whiskey and soda Canton handed him.

'While I was waiting outside the office for the answer to the Chief's message about those Boers near Orange Grove, I saw my "boy" Hendrik in the crowd waving to me. When he came up, he told me he had been out on the veldt yesterday to see the battlefield. Near Langlaate he came upon young Wyk riding into Krugersdorp. Wyk stopped him, and Hendrik, scared out of his wits, said I had sent him to see Katerfelto. Wyk laughed, told him he could go home and tell me I need not trouble about the pony, as I should never see him again; he had been "commandeered" last Wednesday, and was at headquarters at Krugersdorp. Caramba! Fancy those Boer brutes riding him! Why didn't I go and fetch him myself when the row began? If I hadn't been such a confounded idiot I should have done. But, like a fool, I thought he'd be safer on a Boer farm than here.' And he gave vent to his feelings in language which astonished his hearers, who had not realised the depth of his affection for his horse.

'After all, Don, the beggars can ride. They won't spoil him, and as we don't seem to be going to fight, you'll be able to put in your claim when things are straight again,' said Laurence trying to soothe him.

'Yes, when he's lamed and ruined! What do you suppose I sent him out to Wyk's for except to cure that off leg? Any other pony would have twisted his foot right off, but he's as



'CONFOUND THOSE INFERNAL BOERS, THEY'VE COMMANDEERED KATERFELTO!'

nimble as ten cats, and escaped with a bad strain that day we played the soldiers. When I was at the farm on Christmas Eve he went sound enough on the grass, but I should like to know how he's to stand the bucketing he'll get now? No, I shall go and find him.'

His grief was so evident that the other men forebore questioning, seeking to distract him by an account of their doings during his absence, Canton remarking presently,

'That brother of yours must be as strong as a trek ox, Elliot. I declare I felt quite sorry for his men to-day! The chief has made him a sergeant by virtue of his old volunteer training at home, and all this blazing afternoon he's been hard at it, drilling. Such energy you never saw. If he has them at his mercy many more days they'll be the smartest set in the town, for he won't stand any nonsense and yet is so good-natured and jolly they can't turn rusty.'

Elliot laughed and looked pleased. 'I thought he'd do us credit, that's why I sent him word to join this brigade when his mines shut down. That chap's worth ten of me as far as hard work goes. I believe he really enjoys it!'

'Orderly!' shouted the chief from the inner room, and Canton, whose turn it was, hurried off.

'Fred,' said Elliot quietly, when they were left alone, 'I'm really going after the pony. He'll be ruined if he's hard worked now, and there's no risk at all, especially as he comes to heel like a dog, and will follow me anywhere. All I need do is to follow his spoor, lie low till night, then cut him loose and come home. Don't tell any one, but if I don't appear by mid-day to-morrow make inquiries at Krugersdorp. And whatever you do, don't tell Jack. He'd want to come too, and that would spoil everything.'

His friend tried for some time to dissuade him, but finding it useless, agreed to carry out his instructions.

Elliot easily obtained leave for the night, he had been on duty all day, and, besides, so long as the armistice lasted, no fighting was expected. Leaving the camp at sundown, he rode off towards the town until well out of sight, and then struck across country in the direction of Langlaate and Wyk's farm, which lay on the Krugersdorp side of the mine. The road near the farm gate had been much trampled, but after careful search Elliot came upon the spoor he wanted, the print of Katerfelto's light English shoes being easily distinguishable. As he had been told, the pony was evidently at Krugersdorp, and thither

accordingly he directed his steps. A waning moon rode high in a cloudless sky, making the danger of detection by Boer sentries very great; but either they despised the defeated Uitlanders too much to consider it necessary to keep careful guard, or were satisfied the armistice would be respected, for none challenged him till he reached the George and May property, where he thought it advisable to dismount and leave his horse in one of the sheds, intending to fetch him on his way back—if he got back, as he thought grimly.

The kopje, which rose black and forbidding in front of him, was evidently occupied by a strong force, he could see the camp fires and hear the voices and laughter of the men. Judging it would be useless to attempt to get past until the moon had set, he made up his mind to wait patiently till it went down and then to let the course of events decide his action. Accordingly, worn out with his long day, he slept soundly in a corner of the shed till about one o'clock, when he was awakened by the chill of the heavy night dews. The moon had disappeared, the camp was silent and he was preparing to slip past it, when the thought struck him that possibly Katerfelto might be there and he determined to find out.

The peculiar whirring cry of an English night-jar awoke the dreaming Kaffirs, astonishing them by its unfamiliar note, and caused the young sentry, half asleep at his post, to arouse himself hurriedly to listen. A second time it came, very faintly and apparently from so far off that the Boer was reassured, and would have dozed again had not an eager, excited neigh startled the whole camp. All was immediately in commotion, but as it was not repeated and nothing could be seen, the alarm subsided and all was quiet again.

Elliot, amazed at the tumult he had excited and for the moment doubtful of the possibility of recovering his favourite, thought it better to remain in hiding until daybreak, trusting to luck for some more favourable opportunity. The presence of his horse in the shed would, he knew, betray him if noticed, so he decided to slip away and hide among some boulders he remembered about a mile down the road out of sight of the sentry. This he succeeded in doing, and when day dawned, had just settled to make another attempt to get at the pony from the opposite side of the kopje, when the sound of rapidly approaching hoofs was heard, and there, coming towards him, was the grey, ridden by a tall young Boer, whose long legs almost touched the ground, though the powerful little animal

THREW HIS ARM ROUND HIS HUGE ENEMY

carried his fifteen stone easily. The Don started to his feet, stood straight in front of them and calling his favourite by name, ordered him to halt. In spite of a savage kick from his rider, the pony obeyed, stopping so short that the Boer kept his seat with difficulty.

'You will be good enough to get off my horse,' said Elliot in his soft voice and polished manner, as he laid his hand on the rein.

'I'll see you in hell first, *verdomde Englesmann*,' returned the Boer, striking at him with his whip.

'Thank you, I have no particular wish to go there yet, or even to send you before me,' answered Elliot, avoiding the blow, and producing a revolver. 'But you will give me my horse, he is not up to your weight, besides, *gentlemen* don't steal other people's horses, even during war.'

'Steal! who says I steal?' thundered the Boer. 'The horse was commandeered for service, how the devil was I to know whom he belonged to? Thank the Lord, we shall have done with you —— Englishmen directly. Go to Oom Paul if you want compensation, and get out of my way, my despatches are important.'

'As there is a truce I prefer to respect it, otherwise this bullet should go through your head for such uncivil speech,' answered Elliot, still speaking in the quiet, insolent drawl which maddened the young Boer. 'But off my horse you come, or I pull you off.'

'You?' jeered the Boer, looking with much contempt at his slightly-built opponent. At that moment, the Don's sorely-tried patience gave way; with one spring he had flung his arms round his huge enemy, and was doing all he knew to drag him out of the saddle. For some moments his success was more than doubtful, but just as he began to recognise that his strength was almost exhausted, he felt himself lifted bodily into the air, and thrown heavily on the top of the young farmer. Katerfelto, impatient of inaction, had bucked violently, and now stood surveying them in triumph. Both were on their feet again in a moment, and then science began to tell. Boers settle their differences with rifles behind the safe shelter of a rock, not in hand-to-hand encounters; and scientific wrestling is to them unknown. Elliot, for all his softness, came of a Border family, and had learnt the noble art as a schoolboy. His knowledge stood him in good stead at this juncture, and thanks to the timely recollection of a famous north-country 'fling' the

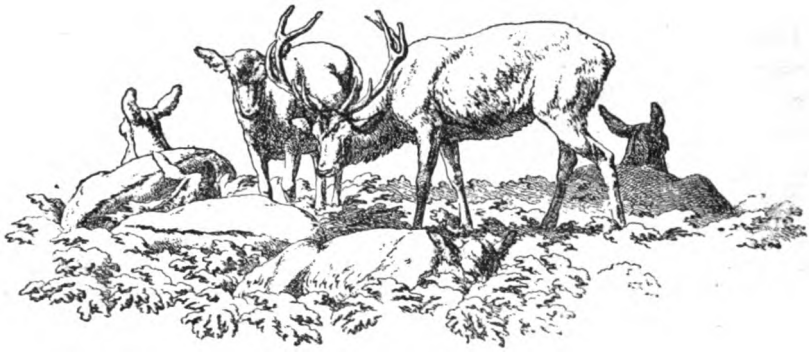
Boer, in spite of his superior height and weight, suddenly measured his length on the ground, receiving, as he lay there, two vicious kicks from the grey's iron-shod hoofs.

Dreading discovery, Elliot jumped on his pony, urged him into a canter, and rode off chuckling; but his elation was short-lived. Before he had ridden two hundred yards, a party of Boers appeared, and on recovering from their surprise at finding their comrade on the ground, discovered him. Several of them promptly raised their rifles, and, in defiance of all truce amenities, fired.

Katerfelto had increased his canter to a gallop, but one of the bullets, better aimed than the rest, went home, and Elliot to his disgust, felt a sharp pang in his left shoulder, and saw his arm drop useless by his side. The Boers did not pursue them, so shifting the reins into his right hand, the Don urged on the pony with voice and knee, keeping him on the grass to save his leg, and trusting to luck to reach the English outposts before he fainted.

Soon after eight that Sunday morning, Laurence, watching from an upper window, thought he saw a horse approaching, which, after a careful survey through his glass, he felt certain was the grey, though the man on his back sat huddled up in a manner very unlike his friend's usual style. Presently it dawned upon him that something was wrong, and hurrying down, he demanded permission from the astonished Chief to take some men and ride out to meet him. This was given, the Chief himself, Canton and four others mounting, while the men were called to their posts for fear of a pursuit.

Some two hundred yards from the nunnery gates they came up to him, not a moment too soon, for he reeled and almost fell as Laurence rode alongside. Walking their horses the little party turned and rode back, Laurence and Canton supporting their friend between them. As they reached the outposts, the well-known pony and his plucky owner were greeted with ringing cheers, for the story of his capture had spread, and all could appreciate the affection which had prompted his rescue. Their acclamations roused the Don, and he sat up and looked pleased, as he tasted, for the first time in his life, the sweets of an approbation, which many a greater man might have been proud to win.



NOTES ON A LATTER-DAY HUNTING TRIP IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS[1]

BY F. C. SELOUS

ON November 3 the weather was cold and stormy, and in the afternoon fine snow commenced to fall. There are, or perhaps I ought rather to say, were, still a few white-tailed deer surviving in this part of the country, and I was very anxious to obtain the head of a fine buck of this species, but scarcely thought it likely that I would be able to do so, as these animals were said to be not only very scarce but extraordinarily cunning, having been educated up to the highest pitch of wariness to which it is possible for a naturally shy animal to attain by constant persecution at the hands of the ranchmen living along the river. In Wyoming white-tailed deer live in the dense scrub which grows in the cottonwood bottoms, along the rivers which flow into the great plains from the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, and never ascend the mountains themselves, like mule deer or wapiti. Once very plentiful, they have now been almost exterminated in this State, as their haunts are being rapidly settled up. One settler living on a ranche just below where we were camped told me that it was several years since he had seen one killed, and said that the few that were left were so shy and wary that it was useless to hunt them. The snow, however, was in my favour, so I resolved to have a good try for one, Graham being as keen in the matter as I was myself. That afternoon we poked about

[1] Copyright 1900, by F. C. Selous.

quietly amongst the scrub along the river but saw nothing. Fine snow kept constantly falling and continued to do so till late in the night, so that when we got up the next morning there was quite a foot of snow on the ground.

As soon as we had had something to eat, Graham and I sallied forth into the white frozen world which lay around our camp. It was November 4, 1897—the day on which the first railway train entered Bulawayo—and we had scarcely walked half a mile from camp when we came on the track of a deer which had passed in the night whilst the snow was still falling. It was impossible to tell exactly what it was, mule deer or white tail, buck or doe, as the hoof-prints had been nearly obliterated by the falling snow. However, Graham thought that, as the tracks led through the scrub near the bank of the river, they had in all probability been made by a white-tailed deer. We had followed them for a couple of miles through several patches of thick scrub and underwood growing amongst groves of tall cottonwood trees, when they crossed the river, which was here some fifty yards wide and from two to three feet deep. Although the temperature must have been down to somewhere about zero, the stream was so swift that there was no ice over it, except just where the water touched the land. It was rather cold work crossing it, for, not wanting to get our footgear and nether garments first wet and then frozen, we stripped below the waist, and went through with bare legs and feet, and had to go very slowly, as the bottom was covered with slippery pebbles and the stream was very strong. Arrived at the other side we soon had our warm German socks and rubber overshoes on again, and by quick walking presently restored the circulation to our numbed feet. We had scarcely done so, however, when the inconsiderate animal we were following re-crossed the river and gave us all our trouble and discomfort over again. After this it led us several miles farther through the thickly timbered bottoms bordering the course of the river. Its tracks, however, had here been made after the snow had ceased falling, and were very easy to follow. They were evidently those of a large buck deer, which Graham now felt sure was of the white-tailed species. The tracks wandered about very much, and though we followed them with the greatest caution, the wary animal we were after presently became aware of our presence, though our general direction was against the wind. I fancy he must have seen or heard us. At any rate we suddenly came upon the bed where he had

been lying in a depression behind a fallen log, which he had left with a bound. It was now eleven o'clock, and we had started the hunt at about eight, and it was not until after 4 P.M. that we finally brought it to a successful conclusion. Having failed to get on to our quarry by tracking, our plan now was to head him off. The patches of scrub from one to the other of which the deer ran when disturbed all lay in the valley of the river, but were often very extensive, making it very difficult to judge where he was most likely to pass. The new snow was greatly in our favour, as we never lost any time looking for the tracks. Graham always kept on the spoor, in order to keep him on the move, whilst I made circle after circle to try and head him and get a shot as he came past me. After having been once disturbed, he never went far before lying down again, but just dodged us, with the most extraordinary cunning. We had played this game of 'hide and seek' for some hours, and it was already late in the afternoon, when the chase led us back once more to the thick scrub of Johnson's ranche, in which we had originally found the tracks of the deer. As I could now hear Webster chopping firewood at our camp, not far ahead, I did not think it likely that the wily old buck would have passed that point, so, making a wide round, I took up a position in the middle of a thick wood, just on the bank of a small frozen stream. Graham, I knew, would presently come quietly on the deer's tracks and once more put him up, though he always got off without becoming visible to his tracker. Would he at last come past me? and should I hit him bounding through the scrub if he did? were the questions which I was putting to myself, when suddenly I saw him. He was coming through the scrubby, rather open bush, straight towards me, in a series of great leaps, rising, I think, quite four feet from the ground at every bound. I stood absolutely still, thinking to fire at him just as he jumped the stream and passed me. However, he came so straight to me that, had he held his course, he must have jumped on to or over me. But when little more than the width of the stream separated us—when he was certainly not more than ten yards from me—he either saw or winded me, and without a moment's halt made a prodigious leap sideways. I fired at him when he was in the air, and I believe quite six feet above the ground. I had the sight fairly on him when I pulled the trigger, and he was so very near me that it would have required a very bad shot to have missed him, though to hit a white-tailed deer when

running, or rather bounding along at a distance of 100 yards, would, I should imagine, be no easy matter. For the moment my shot appeared to make no impression on the buck, as he continued his flight in a line parallel with the course of the little stream, in a series of bounds, which seemed to be taken with extraordinary ease and lightness. In a few moments he was out of sight. I now walked quickly along on my side of the stream, looking for a place to cross it in order to see if there was any blood on the deer's tracks, and had not gone far when I suddenly saw him standing in the scrub, whisking his long fluffy tail from side to side. At the same instant he saw me, and with a bound crossed the stream to my side and, passing through about fifty yards of scrub, ran out into a piece of natural meadow land, perhaps 150 yards in breadth, which divided two patches of bush. Across this piece of meadow land ran a rough wooden fence about four feet in height. Following in the direction the deer had taken, I was just in time to see him clear the fence with such an easy graceful bound that I began to think that I must have missed him after all, or only given him a slight wound. I cut his tracks, however, as quickly as possible, and then saw at once, from the way the blood was sprinkled over the snow, that he had got the bullet right enough through the lungs, and would not be likely therefore to go much farther. On reaching the fence and looking across the open ground beyond, I at once saw the wounded buck standing just on the edge of the farther wood. Then he moved slowly forwards just within it. I now waited till Graham came up, when we at once made for the spot where I had last seen the deer. But before reaching it we saw the wounded beast lying down just within the edge of the wood. He was evidently dying, but fearing lest he might still have strength to make a dash into the river, which was quite close at hand, I killed him with a shot through the base of the neck. He proved to be a fine old buck, somewhat past his prime, Graham thought, but still with quite a nice head for this part of America, where white-tailed deer, I believe, never attained to the size and weight they reach in Lower Canada and the Eastern States. After cleaning him, we dragged him to camp over the snow, and I then weighed him at once. He scaled 12 st. 7 lbs., which would have given him a live weight of about 230 lbs. In Maine and Lower Canada I believe that white-tailed deer have been known to reach a live weight of 320 lbs. I was intensely delighted to have brought to a successful conclusion my only

QUITE SIX FEET ABOVE THE GROUND

hunt after a white-tailed deer, especially as I believe him to have been the only big buck of this species surviving in this part of Wyoming.

On November 5 we moved down to Rock Creek, where I had a great piece of luck the next day. Having climbed to a

HEAD OF WHITE-TAILED DEER, SHOT ON THE SOUTH FORK OF STINKING WATER, NOV. 4, 1897

shoulder of the mountains at the head of the creek, I came suddenly upon four mule deer which I had been tracking for some time. I might have shot any one of them, but as there was only a young buck with small horns amongst them I let them alone. Soon afterwards we came on the tracks of a bull elk, and almost immediately I saw him, about 200 yards off, just going into some thick timber, on the edge of which he had been

lying. Being above him, on the slope of the opposite hill, I could see him making his way amongst the trees in rather deep snow, and as soon as I was able to get a sight on him I fired and hit him. He only went a few yards and then stopped, and I then fired again, and distinctly heard the bullet tell. The wounded animal plunged forward for about ten yards and fell over, and when we got to him we found him quite dead. He was a fine big bull, and would have had a very pretty regular head of twelve points had not the last tine on the right-hand horn got injured in some way whilst still in the velvet.

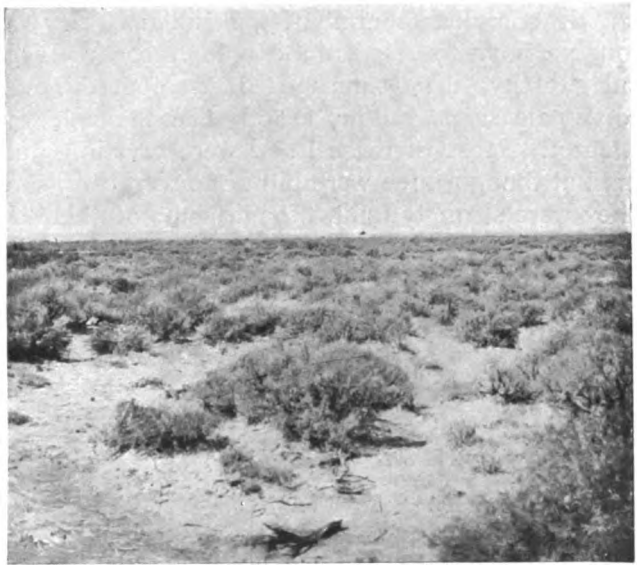
This was my last day's hunting in the Rocky Mountains during 1897, and on the following morning we commenced our journey homewards.

Two days later the weather, which had often looked threatening during the past week, became very disagreeable, and a bitterly cold wind compelled us to take refuge in the dry bed of Sage Creek, under the shelter of a high bank. Before the wind became violent the surrounding plains had been covered with snow, but this was soon torn from the ground, and the whole air became filled with fine particles of snow mixed with sand and pebbles. In the course of the morning I came across two large packs of Sage grouse (*Centrocercus Urophasianus*) numbering quite a hundred together. They were all lying flat on the ground amongst the thinly growing sage brush, with their heads to the wind, and would not rise until I had almost ridden amongst them.

On the following morning, November 9, the icy wind seemed to have increased in violence, if that were possible, and, as we could not well travel during the storm, I rode out to look for antelope. I came across a small band of seven or eight, but could do nothing with them, as they were fearfully wild and the wind made shooting almost impossible. I found, however, the skull of a bison bull in a very good state of preservation, the horns being on the cores, whilst a piece of skin with the hair on it still adhered to the nose. This skull I dragged back to camp with me with the aid of the rope which in Western America one usually carries on the horn of the saddle. I was glad enough to get into comparative shelter again, for the cold wind had chilled me to the bone, whilst I had been half blinded by the sand and dust with which the air was filled. During the night the wind blew with terrific violence, and, although we were camped in the shelter of a high bank, it was all we could do to keep the tent standing with the help of extra ropes, and by piling every-

thing handy of any weight round the sides, both inside and out. The sand and small stones, of which the air was full, kept up a constant rattle against the canvas, and the finer particles beat through and gradually covered everything inside with a fine white powder. However, this last violent gust was the final effort of the storm, for after midnight the wind gradually dropped, and my wife and I were able to relax our watchfulness on the tent-poles and lie down and go to sleep.

On the following day, although the wind was still blowing with disagreeable violence over the open plains of the Bighorn



THE HOME OF THE PRONG-HORNED ANTELOPE, SAGE BUSH PLAIN, BIGHORN BASIN

Basin, we resumed our journey, and after four days of dreary and uninteresting travelling reached a wayside ranche and post-office just at the head of a rocky gorge known as Prior's Gap. My wife and I had had a long and unsuccessful day after antelope, and did not get into the ranche till some time after dark. We were very kindly received by Mr. and Mrs. Bowler, who were old acquaintances of Graham's. We were now in the state of Montana, and on the following morning, almost immediately after leaving Bowler's ranche, crossed the line of the Crow Indian Reservation. In the course of the day we saw from twenty to thirty Crow Indians, amongst them a few women and children. With the memory of Catlin's

portraits of the Crow Indians as they used to be in former days, I could not find these tamed and cooped-up lords of the prairie very interesting. They were all dressed more or less in European costume, and we passed two couples—man and woman—driving in buggies! The costume affected by the male Indians I saw in the Crow Reservation consisted usually of a European coat, waistcoat and trousers, plus a blanket worn like a kilt, fastened round the waist, and hanging to the knees. They nearly all wore moccasins of untanned hide of their own make, but no socks. A handkerchief tied round the head, with a wideawake hat and gloves in cold weather, completed their costume. In complexion none of the Indians I saw were of a rich enough colour to suggest the epithet 'red.' Some were dark and swarthy, like Griquas or dark-coloured Hottentots; others of a pale sickly yellow, exactly like the pale variety of the Hottentot. Most of those I saw were certainly under five feet nine, but though none were tall none were very short. As a rule they were strongly built, though some of them appeared very fleshy. Graham, however, told me that twenty years ago a fat Indian was very rare, and thought they get fat now because they no longer lead a hard wearing life but are well fed by the United States Government without having to do any kind of work for their living. Last year, on my second visit to the Rocky Mountains, I met an American gentleman who has lived out West for more than twenty-five years, and been in close contact with the Indians for the greater portion of that time, especially with the Crows, whose speech he had learnt, as well as the wonderful sign language which, though now fast dying out, used once, it is said, to be understood by every Indian tribe in North America from the Atlantic to the Pacific. He considers the Crow Indians to be a dying race, destined soon to disappear from the face of the earth, as the women bear but few children. They are, too, he averred, the reverse of a moral people, and far from being physically healthy, as there is much congenital disease amongst them. The Sioux, however, a tribe which is made up of eight distinct clans, all of which are now living on reservations in the State of Montana, he looks upon as a splendid race of people, physically, and does not think they are decreasing in numbers. Like the Zulus of South Africa, they endeavour to enforce chastity amongst their women by very strict laws. Should a woman be found guilty of adultery her lips are cut off, often with such barbarous roughness that she loses a piece of her

nose as well during the operation. A woman so disfigured and dishonoured may be sent back to her father, and the ponies [1] that had originally been paid for her reclaimed, or she may be retained by the aggrieved husband, no longer as a wife but as his slave, and the drudge of his other wives. Mr. B—— told me many stories illustrative of the stoical indifference with which North American Indians are capable of bearing physical pain, to which, indeed, they appear to submit cheerfully in cases where it seems unnecessary. He thought that their horrible cruelties to their enemies were possibly the outcome of their reverence for this Spartan virtue which would tend to make the more chivalrous amongst them desire to give their enemies the opportunity of proving that they too were possessed of the one quality in human nature which the red man admires above all others—the ability to bear physical pain without wincing. This theory, I must confess, appears to me untenable, and I am not surprised that, during two hundred years of constant warfare between the white man and the red, the higher motives of the latter, when inflicting ingenious tortures upon the unfortunate pale faces who have from time to time fallen into their hands, have been invariably misunderstood and mercilessly revenged.

Mr. B—— was amongst the first party of American troops which visited the scene of the massacre of General Custer and his force. Every corpse, he informed me, had been stripped naked and mutilated, with the exception of that of General Custer himself, which had been left untouched as a mark of respect for a man who was personally known to his foes as a man of superb personal courage. Should a fight take place, my friend told me, in the neighbourhood of an Indian village, as was the case in the Custer massacre, and should the attacking party get the worst of the fight, it is the women who take the chief part in the mutilation of their dead enemies. The sight of their own dead is said to work these emotional creatures into a state of such sublime fury, that not only do they hack their enemies to pieces and pound their senseless heads to pulp with stone hammers, but often slash their own bodies mercilessly in their frenzy. A Sioux chief whom Mr. B—— had known well in former years, and whom he again met subsequently to the disaster to General Custer's force, in giving an

[1] Amongst the North American horse Indians, wives are bought with horses, which animals are the chief medium of exchange in this part of the world.

account of the fight, in which he took part, said that the Indians suffered little loss in this encounter, as they attacked the whites in overwhelming numbers from the ambushes into which they had craftily led them, and killed them very quickly, General Custer and his brother, who fought their way to the top of the hill, where the monument now stands, being amongst the last to fall. As every corpse was buried exactly on the spot where it was found, a white tombstone now marking each dead man's resting-place, a survey of the battlefield gives one a very good idea as to what took place on that fatal day, when Sitting Bull, for one last brief moment, stemmed the tide of the white man's conquest of that vast continent where once the red man reigned supreme. So complete was the ambush into which they were led, that, as is well known, not a single member of General Custer's well-mounted force escaped. One man, however, the Sioux chief told Mr. B——, got clean through the Indians, and being exceptionally well mounted would in all probability have escaped, when to their astonishment he turned and came galloping back amongst them. Thinking he had gone mad, he was not immediately killed, as a madman is considered to be sacred by the Indians. However, he was soon shot down by warriors too excited to give him the benefit of the doubt. If this story is true, this poor fellow must certainly either have lost his head and been for the moment really mad, or else, seeing that all his comrades had been killed, had determined to share their fate rather than to survive them.

It took us four days to get through the Indian Reservation, and although Indians were usually conspicuous for their absence, there appeared to be no four-footed game left in their country. Sharp-tailed grouse (*Pediocætes phasianellus*), however, were numerous along all the wooded creeks intersecting the prairie lands. These birds are most excellent for the table. I found them either very wild or very tame. They would either get up out of range, or else fly up into a tree, and let you pelt them with sticks or stones for several minutes before flying away. The quaint little prairie marmots were particularly numerous in the Indian Reservation, and on November 15, which was a bright sunshiny day, they were out in hundreds, scuttling over the snow from one burrow to another. Many of them let us pass within twenty yards of them without retiring into their earths. They seemed, however, to be in the wildest state of excitement all the time we were near them, and kept up a continuous cry of 'Cheep, cheep, cheep,' twitching their little tails convulsively

at each note. Their cry sounded to me like that of a bird rather than that of a mammal. I do not think water can be necessary to them, and suspect they obtain the moisture they require from various roots.

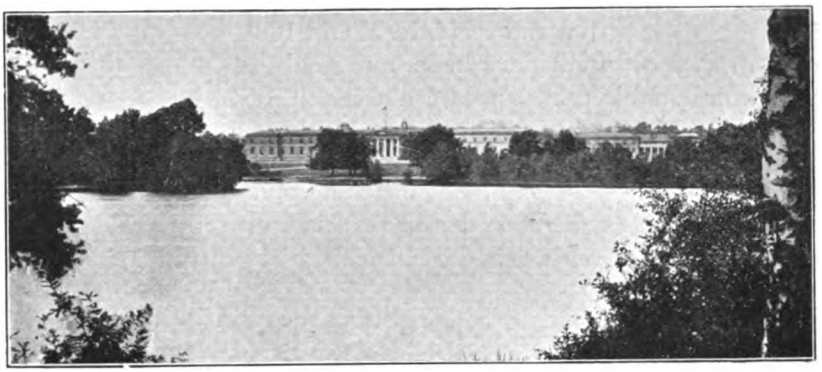
I have nothing further to relate of our Latter-day Hunting Trip to the Rocky Mountains. A few more days of monotonous travel, jog, jog, jogging wearily behind the loose horses, brought

HEAD OF WAPITI, SHOT NEAR DAVIES' RANCHE, NOV. 1897

us at last once more to W. M.'s ranch at Bighorn, where we were most kindly received and hospitably entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Mackee, who were managing the ranch during our friends' absence in England. It took us two days to pack our trophies and get everything ready for our journey home, and during this time I was able to see what hard work is necessary for successful ranching in Western America. A bell was rung at 5 A.M. (two hours before daylight at this time of year, end of November) and all the 'hands'—that is, those who labour on the ranch—assembled to breakfast by lamplight at six. The

cows were milked by lamplight also, and at seven, whilst the stars were still shining, work was commenced on the farm, which with an hour's respite for dinner from twelve to one, was continued all day till dark, the cows again being milked by lamplight in the evening. In Western America, employers of labour, and labourers (there known as 'hands'), always take their meals together, so that we were usually a large party at table on M.'s ranch. One day, Mr. Mackee having gone off with all the hands to do some ditching work, at a distance from the homestead, my wife and I found ourselves alone with Mrs. Mackee and her little four-year-old daughter at the mid-day meal. The little child looked round the room several times expectantly, but becoming at last convinced that no one else was coming to dinner, remarked in a clear nasal voice, 'Why, we're quite a small crowd to-day.' A remark which tickled me immensely.

We finally bade adieu to Western America and all the kind friends we had made in that rich young land of a magnificent future, and entering the train at Sheridan, travelled by Chicago and Toronto to Ottawa, and taking ship at Portland in Maine—traffic on the St. Lawrence having been by that time suspended—finally reached England in time to spend our Christmas at home.



GENERAL VIEW OF THE COLLEGE

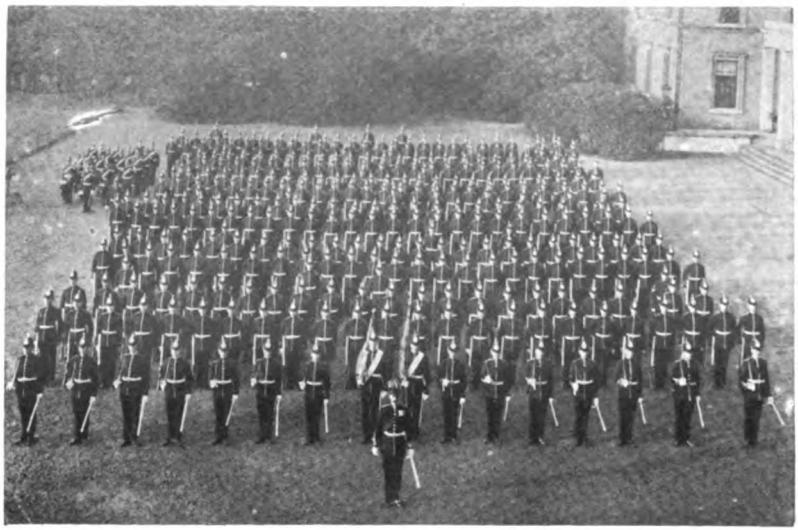
SOLDIER-MAKING AT SANDHURST

BY MAJOR A. F. MOCKLER-FERRYMAN

MOST people know Sandhurst, or at any rate photographs of the solid old building, and its picturesque surroundings ; I do not, therefore, propose describing it, and I will content myself by affirming that the most pessimistic visitor cannot help acknowledging that no more suitable site for a great military institution could well be found. With the past it is, perhaps, unnecessary to deal, though there is much of interest in the history of the College during the hundred years of its existence, and the fact that it has during that time passed nearly a quarter of a million officers into the army, besides training various foreign princes, is sufficient proof that it has done good work. It has, of course, now and again had some bad times, and some merry ones as well, but such things are only to be expected of a place where discipline is being instilled by gentle methods into the minds of three or four hundred high-spirited youths. On the few occasions on which the cadets have kicked over the traces there has generally been discovered some want of tact on the part of the authorities. Whether the officials have become more tactful, or the British youth more sensible, it is not for me to say ; at any rate, since the little so-called mutiny of 1862, no great breaches of discipline have occurred.

Serious as no doubt this *émeute* was at the time, the story of it is not without its amusing side. What particular grievances the cadets imagined themselves to be suffering from has never

been quite clear, but there is little doubt that they were not fed as well as they might have been, and doubtless it was this gastronomic trouble that caused them to put their heads together and plot open mutiny. There was in those days, at no great distance from the main building, a redoubt that had been thrown up for instructional purposes, and its suitability for withstanding a siege the cadets decided to put to the test. The redoubt was secretly provisioned, and on a given signal the mutineers fell in on parade and marched off in a body to take up their posts on the ramparts, armed with loaves of bread as



THE CADET BATTALION ON PARADE

missiles, in case an attempt should be made to carry the work by assault. The authorities were certainly for the moment nonplused, and it was seriously proposed to send for a regiment from Aldershot to put matters straight. Happily, however, it was not deemed advisable to make a public scandal of the affair, and an attempt was made to talk the mutineers into reason. This failed signally, and the cadets defied all comers until the evening, when the prospects of an October night in the open, and a supper of dry bread, induced them to surrender on the promise of the Governor that their grievances should be listened to. Next morning all the corporals were arrested, and the cadets, furious at the breach of faith, returned once more to the redoubt, refusing all terms, until H.R.H. the Duke of

Cambridge appeared on the scene and gave them a piece of his mind, not forgetting, however, to see that justice was done to them. Some of these young rebels are still to be found in the higher ranks of the army, and I have no doubt that the Commander-in-Chief's words of advice are still fresh in their memories, as may be also the following verse of a song that was sung (with caution) for some time after the event:

One thing I know they found
Upon a placard big,
And they asked what was meant
By 'Down with Ginger-Wig.'
I tell you this although
You'll say it matters not;
For though he was abused,
Yet still they were amused,
When they heard the word was used
As a name for Colonel S——t.

Such little outbursts as this were probably in some measure the result of the cadets of the olden times having few healthy recreations. Sports and amusements were few and far between, and until about fifty years ago small interest was shown even in cricket. The course of instruction also was dull, there being little practical work and a deal of dry book-work; consequently the schoolboy (as he really was in those days) spent most of his leisure in devising methods for getting into mischief, and a trained body of college spies was maintained to watch his movements, though they were not of much use except in the matter of checking smoking. Bullying, in the early 'forties,' was very rife at Sandhurst, the 'old Regs,' or seniors, practising actual cruelties on the 'Johns,' as they termed the juniors, and apparently without any cause. It was sufficient to be a 'John' (with a not very complimentary prefix) to be subjected to one or other of the different forms of annoyance, the principle of which were known as 'shovelling,' 'ventilating,' and 'adamising.' The first consisted in spread-eagling the victim on a table, and belabouring him with racquet-bats and shovels; in the second, the miserable 'John' was tied up to one of the ventilators in the room and then javelined with forks; while 'adamising,' though, perhaps, less cruel than the other two, was decidedly disagreeable. In this the cadet was enticed after dark into a room at the extreme end of the building, where he was speedily stripped, and lowered, by means of blankets tied together, on to the parade-ground. As all the doors were locked, there was nothing for it but to pass the sergeant on guard in the Grand

Entrance, and then run the gauntlet of the corridors, which to a modest boy was somewhat of an ordeal.

The authorities do not appear to have altogether disapproved of these practices, but they preferred that any differences between cadets should be settled in a fair fight, which was so far recognised that a staff sergeant was detailed to see that the rules of the ring were strictly adhered to. The fighting-ground was under the big fir-trees at the Governor's gate—known to the cadets as the 'Gimcracks'—and the hour was immediately after morning study. The sequel was interesting: when the sergeant considered that honour was satisfied, he made the belligerents shake hands, and straightway marched them to the hospital. Here they were carefully inspected, and to each was

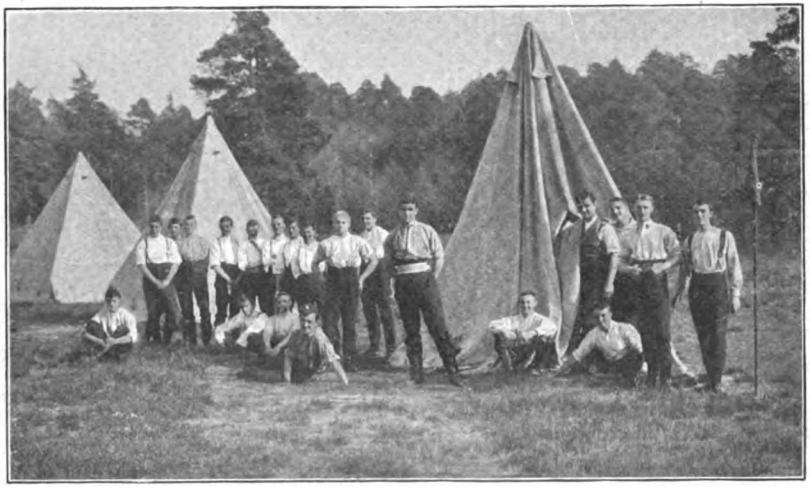
FORMING A BRIDGE OF RAFTS

administered either a black draught or an emetic—by way of cooling the blood—after which they were confined to the College grounds until their bruises had disappeared.

But all these things, together with the black-hole, the cells, 'sentry-go,' and many other time-honoured customs, have long since passed away, and from their ashes has arisen the new cadet—a gentleman whom I will shortly say more about. It is enough for the present to know that the modern cadet has little in common with the cadet of the old *régime*, though the change in their general conditions is doubtless only due to the necessity of keeping pace with the times. A soldier at the beginning of the nineteenth century was made on the rough-and-ready principle, and I do not say that the cadet turned out by the Royal Military College at that period was not quite good enough for the army of the day; but the army itself has

undergone vast changes even since the Crimean War, and the training of the cadets has had to be accommodated to these changes.

Just at the present moment we happen to be passing through a phase of intense military enthusiasm, and every one knows more about the soldier than the soldier does about himself. It is possible that, after the South African troubles are at an end, the 'man in the street' may be able to solve the problem of the best method of training the British soldier for active service. If so, he will have earned his country's gratitude ; but it is more than probable that after the storm will come a calm, and the

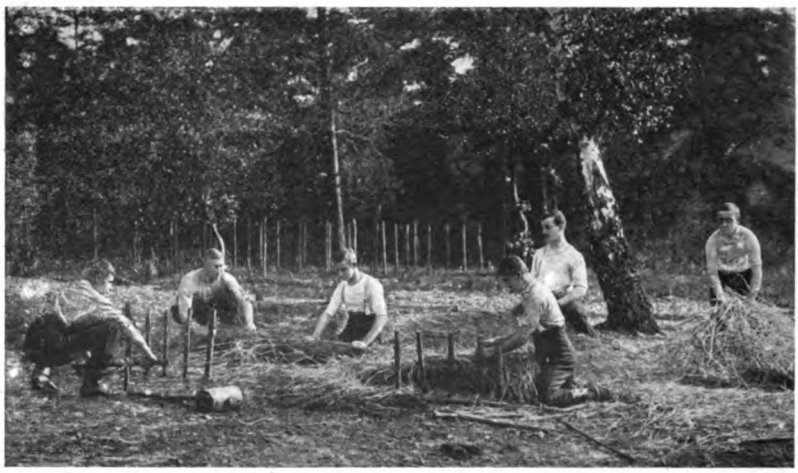


PITCHING TENTS

problem will remain half-solved. We have, however, already learned much, and before the war is over shall have learned considerably more. That the British officer should be trained up to a higher standard than that attainable by the best of the men whom he commands is a necessity, and that he *is* so trained, or at any rate that he arrives in some manner at the standard required of him, is now being fully proved. Without the *mens sana in corpore sano* no professional man can make any strides, but the degree of physical 'fitness' necessary to produce good results must be far higher in the army and navy than in the ordinary civilian professions. The British officer is called upon at times to endure immense hardships and fatigue, and, as every one is aware, in addition to his physical ability to surpass his men in powers of endurance, he has to be so

educated as to be able to instruct those under him in various professional matters. But the mere reading of books will not make a soldier, for theory without practice is of little value, and the difficulty in the matter of the early training of the British officer is to arrange the proportion of mental and physical culture to suit every one.

Fortunately for our army, Englishmen are naturally athletic, and at heart thorough sportsmen, and undoubtedly athletes and sportsmen make the best soldiers; while it is certainly a fact that in no other profession does the good 'all round' man have such a chance of coming rapidly to the front as in the military.



MAKING STRAW MATS

An officer who from his youth has been accustomed to ride to hounds finds, on joining his regiment, that he is instinctively possessed of much that is valuable in the making of a soldier; he has acquired an eye for country, self-reliance, discretion, and a score of other minor qualifications for his calling. Similarly, the football-player, or the athlete, if he has learned nothing else, has discovered, from following his favourite pursuits, the measure of his might; while the man who has had opportunities of walking the moors with gun and rifle, is a 'disciple of Isaak Walton,' a yachtsman, a cricketer, a golf-player, or a follower, in fact, of any of our numerous sports and pastimes, must needs have done something, though unwittingly, towards fitting himself for a soldier's life. The young man, on the other hand, who, in spite of opportunities, has never cared for sport or

games, will, I make bold to assert, be a failure as an officer of the army. There are many young men, of course, whose circumstances may never have allowed of their being either good horsemen or good shots ; but if they are of the right stuff, when the opportunity comes they will take advantage of it. To the latter class belong perhaps some fifty per cent. of the candidates for the army—sons of officers whose means are insufficient to do more than give their boys a good Public School education ; and the majority of these boys, though they have to learn to ride and shoot after passing their examinations for admission to the army, eventually prove themselves as good men as their

A BIVOUAC

more fortunate fellows. All cannot be equally gifted ; some must be able to do things better than others ; and one of the objects of such institutions as Sandhurst and Woolwich is to level up the future officers by giving them a thoroughly sound and practical training, so that they may not be behindhand when they come to take their places in their regiments. Those who fail to reach the required standard are weeded out without more ado, but, as I shall attempt to show, the cadets' course is so arranged and carried out that the few failures that occur each year are among boys who, for one reason or other, have mistaken their vocation in life, and for whom the army is no place.

The officers of our regular army are obtained nowadays, as most people know, from three principal sources—viz., from the

subaltern ranks of the militia, from Sandhurst for the cavalry and infantry, and from Woolwich for the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers. Both the Royal Military College at Sandhurst and the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich have been carried on as Government institutions for a century, and may be considered to have supplied the bulk of the officers of the army from the days of Wellington to the present time, each training some two or three hundred cadets a year, and turning them out physically and educationally fit to take command of the Queen's soldiers. The systems of these two military establish-

HASTY ENTRENCHMENTS

ments are now almost identical, the difference lying only in the technical instruction requisite for the particular branch of the service for which the cadet is destined ; what, therefore, I say of the routine followed at Sandhurst to-day may be taken to apply equally to the sister establishment.

The schoolboy who, on passing the competitive examination, enters on his life as a gentleman cadet at the Royal Military College, feels from the start that he has begun soldiering ; his plain clothes are laid aside at once, and he puts on the uniform which may possibly contain the Field-Marshal's bâton in its lining. It has done so before now, and it is an interesting fact that the present Commander-in-Chief in South Africa had the unique experience of being a cadet both at Sandhurst and at Woolwich. But that was long ago, when Sandhurst was, as I

have already described it, a military school for boys between the ages of thirteen and seventeen, whereas now the latter age is the earliest for admission. The educational course at Sandhurst approaches perhaps nearer to that of the University than to anything else, though a strict form of military discipline pervades everything, the cadets being impressed, from the outset, with the importance of such military peculiarities as punctuality and observance of orders.

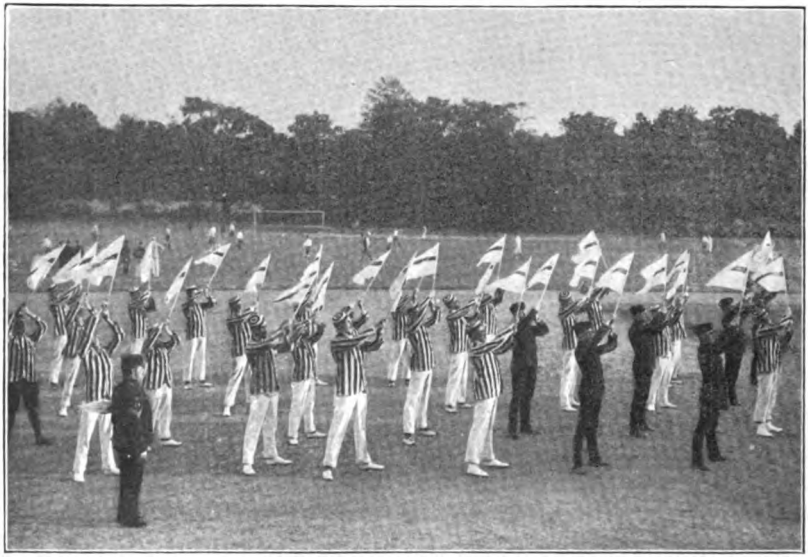
The cadet's working day begins early and ends late. By 7 A.M. in summer and winter the cadet battalion is on parade, being instructed in the rudiments of drill. Then follows break-

CONSTRUCTING A GUN EPAULMENT

fast at 8, study from 9 to 1, an hour for lunch, and the afternoon, from 2 to 7.30, is devoted to physical exercises of various kinds, such as riding, drill, gymnastics, sword drill, &c., with an hour for the study of modern languages. Mess takes place at 8 P.M., and from 9 to 10.15 the cadets settle down in their rooms to private study—*i.e.*, preparation ; and, as can well be imagined, when the bugle sounds 'Lights out,' bed is considered well earned. Wednesdays and Saturdays are half-holidays, so the above programme is only fully carried out on four days of the week ; neither does the work from 3 to 7.30 take every one on all the four working afternoons, and most of the cadets can get in an hour (or even two hours) of wholesome recreation every day.

It will be noticed that the so-called study consists of six

hours' work, but, except in the matter of modern languages and preparation, the actual time given over to book-work is small. The modern method of instruction is to prepare the mind with short lectures of a theoretical nature, and then follow up the subject by putting the theories into practice. The military subjects taught comprise tactics, military administration, military law, military engineering, and military topography, instruction in the two latter being given almost entirely out of doors, and on all fine mornings parties of cadets may be seen in the vicinity of the College hard at work digging shelter-



SIGNALLING

trenches, throwing up field-works, making bridges across the lake, sketching, drawing up tactical schemes, or carrying out other military duties of a like nature. All these exercises aid in the development of the muscles as well as the brains, and though the G. C. imagines himself to be a most overworked individual, he has only himself to blame if he does not, in after life, look back on his year at Sandhurst with a certain amount of pleasure. Not, be it understood, that I imagine for a moment that he will remember, with an even friendly feeling, the hours spent in contouring the bleak slopes of Turf Hill, or the labour with which he excavated his cubic yard of earth; but there is a brighter side to his existence, and never again will he find himself with three hundred and sixty of his own class and

age from whom to pick his friends and with whom to enjoy his leisure time.

What the modern cadet pretends to think of himself may be seen from the following verse of a local song, adapted from our old friend, 'The Noisy Johnnie':

I am a Gentleman Cadet, and I live at the R.M.C.
And many other Gentlemen (Cadets) live there with me;
Oh! we're the boys to make the noise; we won't be taken down,
And we cut such a dash when we're out on the mash in Camberley or York Town.
Our manners at mess are perfect, and our morals, O so high!
And you always hear us coming with our well-known cheery cry.

CHORUS:

Get out of the way, get out of the way,
For the boys of the R.M.C.
For a very fine lot are we,
As I think you'll all agree.
Hullo there! how are you?
I'm very well known, you see;
So what's bad form in other men
Is very good form in me, in me,
Is very good form in me!

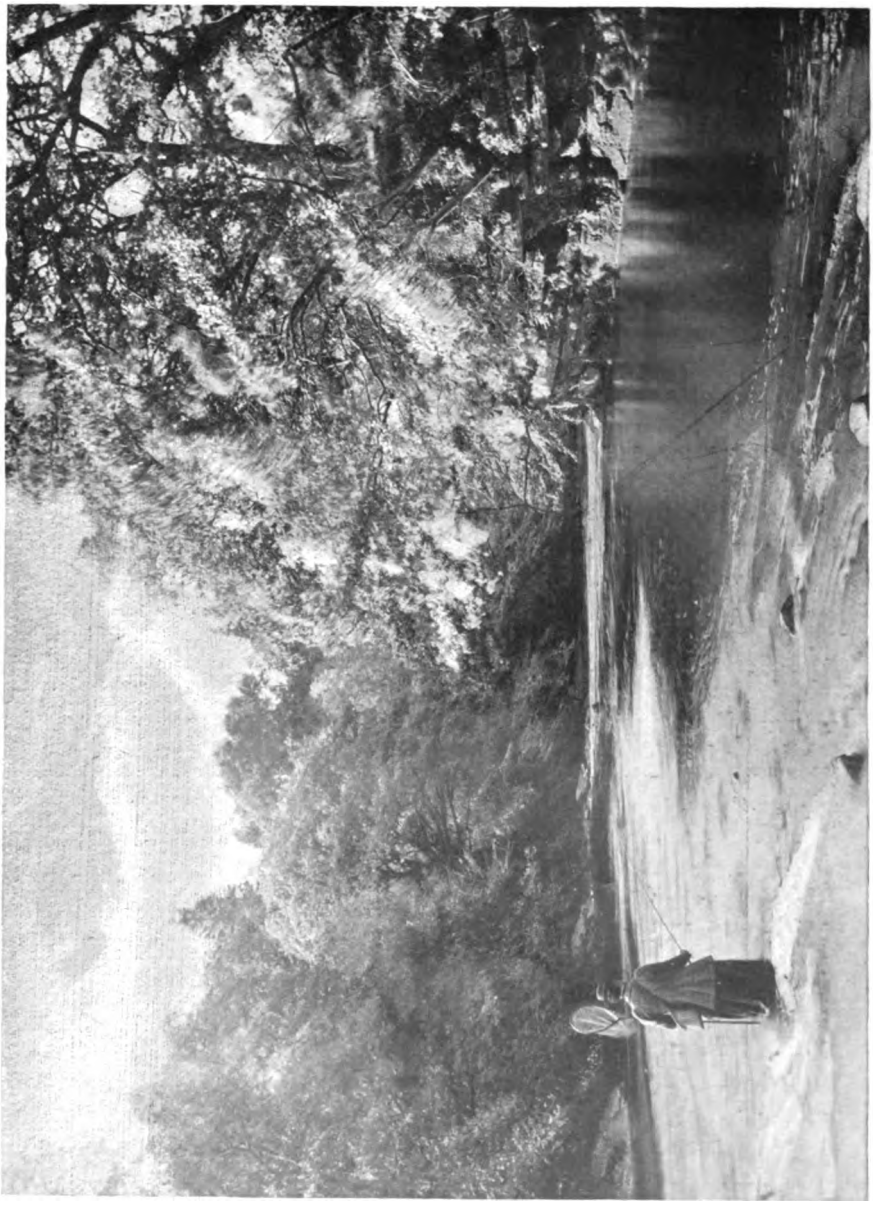
Of course, as a matter of fact, such is not in the least what the cadet actually is, but rather what he imagines other people believe him to be. His time for being 'out on the mash' is restricted, as when not at work his attention is generally occupied with one or other of the many games going on. According to the season, cricket, football, or hockey is in full swing every afternoon, while racquets, fives, lawn-tennis, golf, rifle and revolver shooting, and other outdoor amusements can be indulged in to the full. Polo also was at one time played at the College, and annual gymkhana meetings held, but these, on economical grounds, it was deemed advisable to stop. Still the cadets are encouraged to ride and hunt, and take part in all manly sports, and a sight of the competitors at the athletic meetings, the cross-country runs, or the fencing and boxing tournaments will prove to any one that the physique of the British officer is in no way deteriorating. Riding drill, gymnastics, sword exercise, and swimming all form part of the course of instruction, but it is undoubtedly the time voluntarily devoted to outdoor amusements that produces the men, capable of any amount of endurance and unequalled for dogged determination, who are now giving the world an object-lesson in South Africa.

A PRIZE COMPETITION

THE Proprietors of the *Badminton Magazine* offer a prize of Ten Guineas each month for the best original photograph sent in representing any sporting subject. Ten other prizes will also be given away each month, each of them consisting of an original drawing by one or other of the artists who illustrate the Magazine. Good clear pictures are of course necessary, and when possible the negative should be sent as well as the print. Competitors may also send any photographs they have by them on two conditions: that they have been taken by the sender, and that they have never been previously published. A few lines explaining when and where the photographs were taken should accompany each negative. Residents in the country who have access to shooting parties, or who chance to be in the neighbourhood when hounds are running, will doubtless find interesting subjects, and these will also be provided at football or cricket matches, wherever golf, cycling, fishing, skating, polo, athletics are practised. Racing and steeplechasing, including Hunt Meetings and Point-to-point contests, should also supply excellent material. All matters of public school interest will be welcome.

THE APRIL COMPETITION

The prize for the April Competition has been awarded to Mrs. Delves Broughton for the photograph which is given on the opposite page. Prizes have been sent to the takers of the photographs which follow, and to certain others for whose work space could not be found.



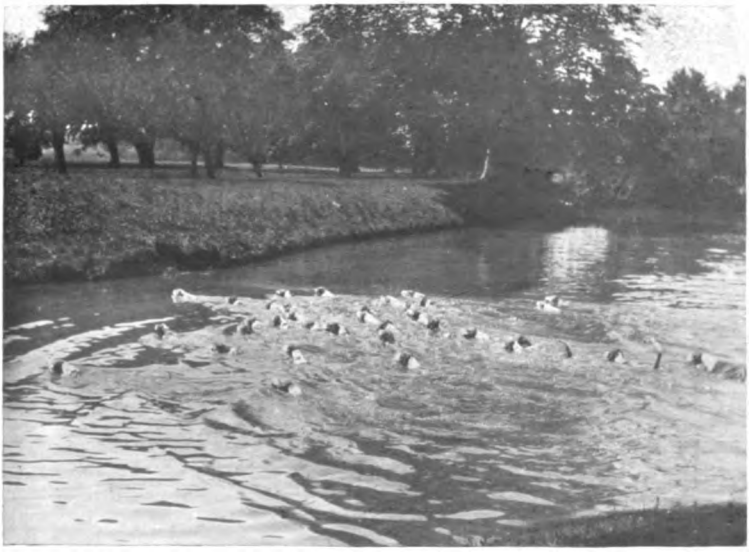
A LIKELY POOL

Photograph taken by Mrs. Delves Broughton

LINCOLN SPRING RACE MEETING, 1900
THE SUDBROOKE SELLING PLATE, SHOWING THE STARTING GATE
Photograph taken by Mr. F. H. Hutton

THE START FOR THE LINCOLNSHIRE HANDICAP
MR. ARTHUR COVENTRY IN THE FOREGROUND
Photograph taken by Mr. F. H. Hutton

THE ATHERSTONE FOX-HOUNDS: MEET AT BENTLEY, NEAR ATHERSTONE
Photograph taken by Mr. E. E. Bourne



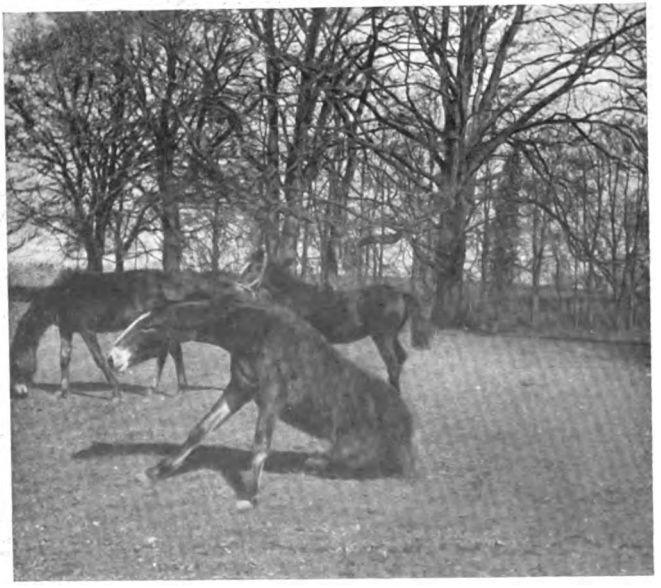
THE SUFFOLK FOX-HOUNDS: CROSSING A STREAM AT LACKFORD
Photograph taken by Mr. Hugh S. Holden

SETTING

BACKING

ON AN IRISH GROUSE MOOR

Photograph taken by Mr. D. J. W. Edwardes



HUNTER YEARLINGS

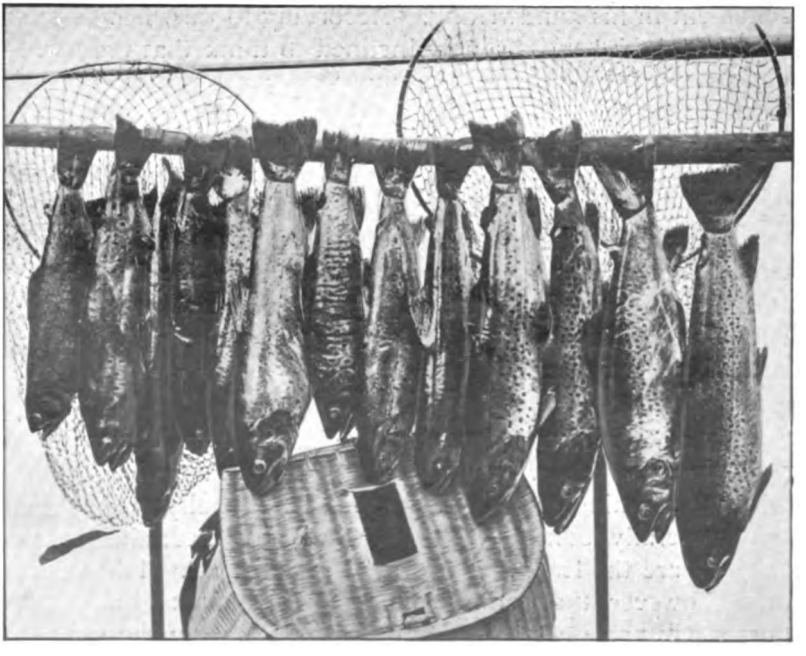
Photograph taken by Miss Mabel M. Thomson

AN EXCEPTIONAL CATCH
AN INGENIOUSLY FAKED PHOTOGRAPH
Photograph taken by M. L. G. André, Paris

MEMBERS OF A FRENCH SHOOTING SOCIETY
Photograph taken by M. L. G. André, Paris

THE BUCKLEY OTTER-HOUNDS: HUNTING ON THE SEVERN, NEAR WELSHPOOL
Photograph taken by Mr. John Lane

DEER-STALKING IN ROSS-SHIRE
Photograph taken by Mr. George Won



TROUT CAUGHT MARCH 16, 1900, ON THE HORTON PLAINS, CEYLON
Photograph taken by Miss H. S. Turner, Ceylon

NOTES

BY 'RAPIER'

I NOTICE in 'Ruff's Guide' a table of the winnings of famous racehorses from 1885, the list being of course headed by Isinglass with £57,454. This will no doubt be generally accepted as the record, for few people are in the least likely to make the calculation for themselves. In the very first number of this magazine, however, Colonel H. B. McCalmont was good enough to write out for me a detailed list of the amount of stakes won by Isinglass, and I published a facsimile of the statement in his handwriting. According to this, Isinglass won £57,185, and I am strongly inclined to think that the owner's figures must be correct, the more so as some of the races worked out to rather unusual amounts. The New Stakes at Ascot, for instance, credited Colonel McCalmont with £2006, the Princess of Wales Stakes with £10,911, the Eclipse with £9285, the Jockey Club Stakes with £11,302. It is just as well to be accurate in such a calculation as that which shows the largest sum ever won by any single horse on the English turf. It is certain that £57,454 and £57,185 cannot both be right, and Colonel McCalmont is, as a general rule, exceedingly careful in his figures.

My editorial experiences in the Badminton Library, in this magazine, and elsewhere, have really—I am sure I may say so without claiming too much—been exceptionally great; and I have generally found that people who know most about various subjects are the least ready to write about them. I do sincerely hope, however, that some one who understands and appreciates horses will presently have something to tell us of the behaviour and peculiarities of English-bred animals out at the war. Their

treatment and the work they are called upon to do must be so different in South Africa from what it is in England, that a sympathetic description would be of the deepest interest to lovers of horses. I had a letter some time since from one of the best of soldiers and sportsmen, Colonel R. B. Fisher, commanding the 10th Hussars—who has been at the front with General French throughout a great part of the campaign—eulogising the behaviour of his favourite charger 'Slane.' 'The old darling,' as he calls him, has won his regimental cup four times (I remember Colonel Fisher describing the delight with which the good horse's victory was received at Folkestone last year, it never for a moment having occurred to him that any of the enthusiasm was meant for the owner and rider as well), has hunted in nearly every county in England, and done a desperate lot of hard work, I am afraid on very short commons, before and since the relief of Kimberley ; and his owner remarks that shells and bullets really seem to amuse the old horse. Some detailed experiences of 'Slane's' proceedings would be of the greatest interest. I believe Mr. Reginald Ward took out something that had been in training in Mr. Arthur Yates' stable, and here again one would like to know how a horse that had done duty between the flags comported himself on the veldt ? I can only hope that such an article as I am looking for may presently be forthcoming.

Ascot will be approaching when this number is published, and I experience my constant trouble of having to write these notes so far in advance that it is impossible to discuss the programme. The only consolation is that even after the races have been run and won very little is often known about the real capacity of the animals that have figured at the meeting. Take the Coventry Stakes for example. When The Deemster was successful the first year of its institution it seemed practically certain that he would make a great name for himself, but that name is written nowhere else among the winners of famous races. Ladas and Persimmon throw some sort of lustre on the Coventry Stakes ; but we have found other winners, Whiston, for example, unsuccessfully carrying low weights in poor handicaps, and we have seen Orzil, who it was imagined would do wonderful things after his victory in 1897, running unsuccessfully in £40 hurdle races. There are few events in the list of bygone Ascot results that do not call up reminiscences,

and if one went into details, an article on the subject would extend into a book. The history of the Hunt Cup alone is a tempting theme. One would dwell on the really marvellous performance of Peter in 1881, who, with 9st. 3lb. on his back, actually stopped to kick, in this race which is run at such tremendous speed from end to end, and yet won comfortably. There would be some exciting paragraphs about the objection to Despair in 1886, a race I well remember, having had a small share of the very large stake for which Eastern Emperor was backed for a place—a place he might very easily have obtained but for the fact that his jockey carefully kept him out of it, and on being asked for an explanation could hit on no better than that he 'quite forgot.'

Perhaps there never was a more exciting race at Ascot than that of the Hardwicke Stakes in 1887, when it was supposed that Minting, fit and well, would at last have his revenge on Ormonde, suffering as the great chestnut was from infirmity of wind. How the race was fought out, and Tom Cannon landed Ormonde by a neck, will never be forgotten by those who saw it; and indeed that was altogether an exciting year, for General Pearson's Anarch was supposed to be something akin to a wonder, Seabreeze beat him easily in the Biennial, Seabreeze and Ayrshire came out in the New Stakes to oppose Friar's Balsam, who arrived from Kingsclere with a reputation of being a marvel, and really went far to justify it by the ridiculous ease with which he disposed of the subsequent winners of the Derby, the St. Leger and the Oaks—not to mention the other races that Ayrshire and Seabreeze won. I contemplated an article on Ascot, but may congratulate readers on not having carried out the intention, for it would have been unending if one had gone into such anecdotes as, for instance, that of F. Webb's ingenious little scheme of winning the Hardwicke Stakes on Lord Ellesmere's Wallenstein in 1882 by almost pulling up when he came to the turning which led to Tristran's stables, in order that that very tricky animal might be induced to believe that he had merely been for an exercise gallop and was about to be taken home. George Fordham, who rode Tristran on that occasion, was very nearly shot over the horse's shoulder as he swerved. 'I shall let some of those long-legged fellows ride that horse next time,' he remarked to me after the race when he returned to the paddock, the good thing having as nearly as possible come undone.

I am constantly asked questions about papers in Paris which are devoted to sport, and now that so many Englishmen who are going to see the Exhibition are likely to make an excursion to some of the numerous racecourses round Paris, an answer may be of service to a number of readers. Paris is particularly well supplied with racing papers, most of them have their special characteristics, and several are really remarkably well done. Sport is particularly well summed up in a morning journal called *Auteuil-Longchamps*, the brief articles in which are written with a great deal of discrimination. *Le Jockey* is also a very knowledgeable journal, *Les Courses*, and *L'Echo des Courses* are well worth looking at, and *Paris-Sport* is useful, as it comes out in the evening as well as the morning, though so far as I have noted, with, as a rule, a very brief and incomplete summary of what has taken place. The more serious papers give the tips, and quoted among the lists of *Appreciations de la Presse* one even finds such journals as *L'Intransigeant*, though I suppose that no decent person would soil his gloves by touching M. de Rochefort's disgraceful gutter print, altogether worthy as it is of its proprietor.

A little journal which I have always found particularly useful is a tiny paper called *La Cote des Courses*. It gives what is practically the card of the day (with the numbers omitted), the entries, owners, weights, trainers, and pedigrees, and under the head of 'Nos Appreciations' a notably excellent judge of racing supplies the list of probable runners, jockeys, the betting —which however is absolutely of no importance as it is scarcely ever a guide—with a summary of what the competitors have done and what is to be expected of them. The writer sums up by advising his readers what to back 'gagnant et placè,' and further what to back for a place only; he also gives one or two special morning selections—what are called in England 'the good things of the day'—and his accuracy I have found as a rule quite extraordinary. Some of these papers recommend every day certain trainers, jockeys, and journals, which are to be specially followed. They do this on some eccentric system of averages, so far as I can make out, but the whole business is the merest rubbish. A little halfpenny paper well worthy of attention is called *Les Courses*. One feature of this is a selection under the heading 'Les Favoris de la Presse.' The compiler counts up how many times different horses are given, and formulates the result in a little table. There are also some

special messages from certain training quarters, drawing attention to the recent work of various horses engaged. Equipped with *La Cote des Courses*, *Les Courses*, and *Auteuil-Longchamps* or *Le Jockey*, a stranger visiting a French racecourse may derive a very accurate idea of what is going to happen ; and if he uses these papers with discretion and has a few bets at the pari-mutuels, he is just as likely to win a little as to lose.

One of the great pleasures of a walk in the country, or for the matter of that in the London parks also, is derived from a knowledge of the birds one comes across, and it is extraordinary how many people are totally ignorant of even the most common species. They think they know a robin because he has a red breast ; a small bird strikes them as probably being a sparrow, a larger one as not improbably a thrush ; they can tell a woodcock by his beak when they don't think that he is a snipe ; and with some confusion between a rook and a crow, their knowledge of ornithology not uncommonly ends. As for the differences between the great, common, and jack snipe, and between the varieties of geese, confusion is very much more the rule than the exception. Some persons are aware that a Brent-goose is more or less black, and they might reasonably guess that the Lesser Snow-goose is smaller and light in colour. It is strange that people should be so ignorant of creatures they so constantly see—though I do not mean to say that the spectacle of the Lesser Snow-goose, for instance, is common in the United Kingdom. These remarks are suggested by a really beautiful book, and a valuable one withal, which has been sent to me by Messrs. Pawson and Brailsford of Sheffield, entitled 'The Game Birds and Fowl of the British Islands,' by Charles Dixon, with coloured plates by Mr. Charles Whymper. These latter are excellent in their elaboration. The only criticism not wholly favourable I have to pass on them is that a few strike me as somewhat too highly coloured. The partridge, for example, is not quite such a brilliant bird as here shown. Accuracy of drawing is, however, so far as my knowledge goes, a most commendable feature in the illustrations ; and it is evident that no trouble or expense has been spared on these productions. There is a glow on the pheasant which forms the frontispiece that looks as if the old cock had the sun shining on him on some bright October day. Mr. Dixon gives details of the Geographical Distribution, Allied Forms, Habits,

Nidification and Diagnostic Characters of the various birds introduced. The book is one that must be spoken of with the highest admiration.

My sometime contributor, Mr. P. F. Warner, the well-known cricketer, has just issued a book on the 'Institution'—that it is 'not a game but an institution' there is authority for saying—called 'Cricket in Many Climes.' Mr. Warner has been out with teams to the West Indies, to America on more than one occasion, to Canada, to Portugal, and to South Africa. Probably no one has played so much in so many different places, and though sometimes inclined to go into unnecessary detail—there is nothing noteworthy, for instance, in the statement that on a certain occasion he went to the theatre to see 'What Happened to Jones'—the volume will be found a decidedly entertaining one by those who are interested in the subject. Mr. Warner chances to have been born in Trinidad, and it was extremely natural, therefore, that he should have desired to do well in his first match in his native island when a member of the team which went out under the captaincy of Lord Hawke. Happily he 'came off.' At lunch time he was 97 not out, and the first ball after lunch he sent to square leg for four.

Mr. Warner himself captained the team that went to America, and they were warmly received. 'Mr. Warner and his fellow cricketers are all-wool-and-a-yard-wide,' was the eulogistic comment in a Baltimore paper. As a general rule visitors had things their own way, but the Gentlemen of Philadelphia beat them on one occasion, the Englishmen's excuse being that in a hopelessly puzzling light they could not see the ball. Mr. Chinnery was out in the first 'over,' and Mr. Warner was dismissed in the second; on leaving the wicket he appealed against the light, but the umpire suggested 'one more over' and this 'one more' accounted for Marriott and Stocks, both of whom declared they never saw the ball. Stumps were then drawn and the telegraph read cheerlessly enough to disspirit any team, 0—4—0. Portugal does not strike one as a place very closely associated with cricket, but the visitors appear to have had some good games and were set down by local critics as 'afadamos jogadores de cricket,' which means something very complimentary.

As an orator on one occasion after dinner Mr. Warner was less successful than he had been at the wickets; for he endeavoured to flatter the Chicago eleven by telling them that they were quite the best his team had ever met on the other side of the Atlantic, excepting only the Philadelphians, the New Yorkers, the Baltimore fifteen, the Toronto eleven, and the Montreal eleven. As the Englishmen had played against no others this was not particularly gratifying to the pride of Chicago. In South Africa matting has to be pressed into service for lack of grass, and this is naturally extremely puzzling. One of the team which Lord Hawke captained two and a half years ago was Mr. F. W. Milligan, whose name unhappily figures in the list of killed during the war. Matches were played at many places which have since then become famous. Matjersfontein—so Mr. Warner spells it—mustered a twenty-two against them and they were received by the President—if that title is still correct?—who was 'wearing a top hat that might have belonged to an unpopular referee after a football match.' The nature of the book will perhaps be gathered from these comments.

A West Indian team is to play this month in England, and Mr. Warner thinks that Englishmen will be very much struck with the throwing powers of the black men, nearly all of them being able to throw well over 100 yards. Cumberbatch and Woods are said to be really very good bowlers, as also is Mignon, and it is probable that good scores will be made by Goodman, D'Ade, and Sproston—Austin, a very good bat also mentioned, has, I believe, gone out to South Africa with Paget's Horse. Some of the black cricketers take the game very seriously. Mr. Warner describes one who on being given out went back to the pavilion and wept bitterly. He had been stumped, but Mr. Bromley-Davenport, who was umpiring at the bowler's end, stepped forward and explained that the man was not out legally, as he had thoughtlessly called 'over' before the decision was given. Shaking with sobs the man was therefore led back to the wicket, with nerves so shattered that he promptly ran two men out.